PIONEER DAYS

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PIONEER DAYS

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GORDON CAUGHT UP AN AXE AND DECLARED THAT IF THEY KILLED HER, THEY SHOULD KILL HIM FIRST.

PIONEER DAYS

COMPILED BY
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ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE

The stories of early frontier life here presented, which are taken from the early histories of the West and from lives of the frontiersmen and pioneers written by contemporaries and eye-witnesses, introduce the reader to an intimate acquaintance with the Indian races of the country which lies east of the Rocky Mountains. The savage warrior and hunter is presented, stripped of all the decorations with which writers of fiction have dressed him. He is seen in his ferocity and gentleness, in his rascality and nobility, in his boyhood, manhood and old age, and in his wisdom and ignorance. The accuracy and truth of these descriptions of the life and adventures of the period cannot be questioned, and they give us a vivid and inspiring picture of the conditions under which part of our country was opened up for civilization.

The busy hand of improvement has swept over that beautiful country, and, although it has not destroyed its natural beauties, or

changed those charming features which made it the garden of America, it has swept away almost every vestige of those primitive structures around which center so much of romance and thrilling interest. The humble "log cabin" and the rude "station" have given place to the modern farm house and the thriving city; and where the crack of the hunter's rifle, the yell of the Indian, and the howl of the wild beast alone disturbed the Sabbath-like stillness of the primeval forest, the hum of industry, the shrill whistle of the locomotive, and the sound of the loom and shuttle, mark the gigantic and rapid strides of civilization which has, with relentless force, driven the red man from his native haunts, and like some gigantic Colossus, with one foot on the shores of the Atlantic and the other upon the Pacific, exclaimed, "Veni, vidi, vici."

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Pioneer Days

JOSIAH HUNT, THE INDIAN FIGHTER

In searching among the records for the perfect type of that class of men who are pre-eminently entitled to the cognomen of "Indian fighters," we have been able to find none in whose individuality was combined so many characteristics of the class as in the subject of the following sketch.

Nature had given Hunt a frame of iron mould, and a constitution which no hardship, privation, or suffering could impair. Reared in the midst of those scenes of trial through which the early settlers were compelled to pass, to win from the wilderness a home and home comforts; trained from boyhood to the use of the unerring rifle; hunting for a subsistence in the wild forests which covered the western country, and eating his food in the simplicity which Nature gave it, without any of those appliances for increasing the relish with which epicures season it, he

grew to man's estate free from any of the "ills that flesh is heir to," well-knit, strong, hardy, robust, capable of enduring any amount of fatigue, his senses taught by experience in the woods and in constant strife with the most subtle foe; with an eye like a hawk, a hand as quick as thought, and with limbs in which were combined great strength and agility, he was "every inch a man."

As a hunter, he was rarely equalled. His habits, his inclinations, his early life and his necessities all combined to make him expert in the pursuit of game. Adopting all the craft and cunning of the red men, to which he added the intelligence of the pale-face, he was always successful where others would have despaired. By constant and unremitting observation and practice he could imitate the voices of all the denizens of the forest, from the growl and bark of the bear, to the call of the smallest songster of the vale; and these powers were of immense service to him in luring the game, as well as in deceiving an enemy. As an Indian fighter, he possessed all the subtlety and artifice of the foe, with the tact, stratagem, powers of concentration and persevering determination of the

white man. No trap, however artfully and cunningly laid, ever caught him unprepared; and the Indians themselves awarded him the praise of being the most silent, artful, and dangerous enemy they ever met.

When Wayne was despatched into the northwestern country to chastise and bring to terms the various tribes who had leagued together with a determination to restrict the approach of the whites to the Ohio River, he gathered about him all the Indian fighters, scouts, spies and hunters whom he could in any way induce to join his army. There were Wells, Kibby, McClellan, May, Hickman, Thorp, Mahaffy, the Millers, and a host of others, who deserve more than a passing notice and there was one who excelled them all—Josiah Hunt.

While the army was stationed at Greenville, in the winter of 1793–4, Hunt was employed in furnishing the tables of the officers with game, and of course was exempted from every other duty. He had a *carte blanche* to go and come when he pleased, take what he wished, and do as he desired; in fact, was free of the fort in every respect. The country was overrun

with Indians; the fort was watched by scouts and spies, who stationed themselves in trees the better to overlook the garrison; and when a person was seen to leave, note was taken of the course he pursued, his path ambuscaded, and his scalp secured. Hunt was too cunning for them, however. He invariably left after dark; and he used to say, "when he got into the woods without their knowledge, he had as good a chance as they had." To spend the night in the woods without a fire, during the severe cold of that winter, would have been almost certain death; for no human being could do it without the most imminent danger of freezing to death. To show a light, however, was to invite certain destruction. Hunt did the one without fear of the other. His mode of procedure was as follows: He would leave the camp about three hours after dark, and, travelling by a circuitous route for some miles in the direction of the section where he intended to hunt the next day, he would bivouac for the night.

His arrangements for this purpose were made in the following manner: With his tomahawk he cut a hole in the frozen earth

about the size and depth of a hat-crown, and after it was made to his liking, with as little noise as possible, he prepared some "roth" or white-oak bark, from a dead tree, which will retain a strong heat when covered with its ashes. Kindling a fire from flint and steel at the bottom of his "coal-pit," as he termed it, the bark was severed into strips, which were laid crosswise in the hole until it was filled. After it was sufficiently ignited, it was covered over with dirt, with the exception of two air-holes in the margin, which could be opened or closed at pleasure. Spreading down a layer of bark or brush to keep him from the ground, he sat down with the coal-pit between his legs, enveloped himself in his blanket, and slept catdozes in an upright position. If his fire became too much smothered, he freshened it by blowing into one of the air-holes. He declared that he could make himself sweat whenever he chose. The snapping of a dry twig was sufficient to awaken him, when, uncovering his head, he keenly scrutinized the surrounding gloom, his right hand on his trusty rifle, "ready for the mischance of the hour."

What a picture of self-reliance, bodily endurance, firmness of nerve, and cool, calm courage is here presented! The citizen of the present day, surrounded by every appliance of civilization and comfort, without fear of danger, cannot realize the situation of this hardy son of the forest as he sat, undistinguishable in the darkness from an old stump, surrounded by hordes of enemies—cruel, blood-thirsty and implacable enemies—who sought with untiring energy and increasing vigilance to take his life; while the wild beasts—the bear, the panther and the wolf—roamed the woods round about in search of prey. Alone in the wilderness, with no friend to aid, no arm to save him but his own, there he sat, that lone man, nodding in his blanket—while the winds of winter howled the sad requiem of the departed year and the pitiless storm raged with fury perhaps—with every nerve on the stretch, every faculty on the alert, ready at a moment's warning to engage in the deadly struggle for life, knowing that success depended upon his rifle, his own right hand and unerring eye. How little of this can we realize, as we sit about the blazing hearth-

stone, sheltered from the inclemencies of the weather, or retire to our comfortable blanketed couches, free from danger, and "with none to make us afraid." Yet there must have been an excitement, an intense and thrilling interest in such a life, calculated to send the blood with electric rapidity through the veins, and make such a man infatuated with it.

As soon as it was light enough to see, he was on his feet, and, leaving his camp-ground, would proceed to hunt for game, keeping, at the same time, a good lookout for Indians. If he discovered a deer, he would slip a bullet into his mouth, to be prepared to load again immediately. This was his first care—never to be caught with an empty rifle. After shooting his game, he secreted himself until satisfied that the report of his piece had brought no Indians into his immediate vicinity, and he would then proceed to skin it. Approaching it cautiously, he would drag it to the nearest tree which answered his purpose, and, after leaning his rifle against a tree within reach of his hand, would commence the operation. He would skin for awhile, and then raise himself up to scan the forest in every

direction to see if the crack of his rifle had brought a foe to the vicinity, and then proceed with his work. If the breaking of a twig or any other sound evinced the proximity of animal life, he was immediately on the alert, with rifle in hand, prepared for any emergency. Having skinned and cut up the deer, the four quarters were packed in the hide, which was so arranged as to be slung to his back like a knapsack, and in this manner he wended his way to the fort. If he was at a distance from the garrison, only the hind quarters were brought in. On one of these excursions, he discovered three Indians in a party, proceeding along the base of a ridge on which he was. Quickly concealing himself, he took aim, but waited for two of them to get out of range, being willing to risk himself with the other. But they continued to march in Indian file, and, although he could have killed either one of them, he concluded that the odds of two to one would be too great, without gaining more than the death of one enemy; so he let them pass.

When the army moved forward to the Maumee, for the purpose of giving battle to the

Indians, Hunt was with it, and took an active part in the action at the "Fallen Timber". In the midst of the confusion consequent upon the first charge, he was about to spring over a fallen tree, when an Indian behind it fired at him so close that the flash almost singed his face. He had been obliged to fire in such haste, however, that he missed his aim, although the ball passed between the ear and the head of the hunter, making his ear ring for an hour afterward. As soon as he fired the Indian sprang up, and darted off at his utmost speed, running zigzag, "like the worm of a fence," dodging up and down, and endeavoring in every way to escape the ball from his enemy's rifle. He knew the man he had fired at, and knew also that *he* never missed his mark. His body was naked from his waist upward, and had a bright red streak painted up and down the back, which afforded a prominent mark for an experienced shot. Hunt sprang over the tree, and threw his rifle into the hollow of his shoulder, exclaiming, "Hold on a moment, stranger, Kill-deer has got a word to say to you"; and taking aim at the red strip, he seized the moment when the Indian

was rising to his feet, and fired. Although a snap-shot, it was an effectual one and the redskin fell dead. He had fought his last battle.

At the treaty of Greenville, in 1795, the Indians seemed to consider Hunt as the next great man to Wayne himself. They inquired for him, gathered around him, and were loud in their praises and compliments: "Great man, Captain Hunt—great warrior—good hunting man; Indian no can kill!" They informed him that some of their bravest and most cunning warriors had often set out expressly to kill him. They knew how he made his secret camp-fires, the ingenuity of which excited their admiration. The parties in quest of him had often seen him—could describe the dress he wore, and his cap, which was made of a raccoon's skin, with the tail hanging behind, the front turned up, and ornamented with three brass rings. The scalp of such a great warrior they considered to be an invaluable trophy; yet they never could catch him off his guard—never get within shooting distance without being discovered, and exposing themselves to his death-dealing rifle. He settled in Greene County, Ohio, after peace was declared, and

"HOLD ON A MOMENT, STRANGER, KILL-DEER HAS GOT A WORD TO SAY TO YOU."

became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Captain Wells mentioned at the beginning of this sketch was taken prisoner when a child, and adopted by Big Turtle, the most eminent forest warrior of his time. When he grew up, he became, in all respects except color, an Indian. He took part in all their battles, and was at the defeat of Harmar and St. Clair. In the latter action he commanded a picked corps of Indians, who were opposed to the artillery, and caused much slaughter among the men who served it. After that affair, foreseeing that the whites would make such exertions to punish the Indians as must, by their preponderance of power, be successful, he left them, and soon after joined Wayne's army at Greenville. His thorough acquaintance with the habits, customs, resources of the various tribes, made him a valuable auxiliary to the army, and he was placed in command of a chosen corps of spies, composed of intrepid men like himself, and was allowed to choose his time of coming and going, as well as to take whatever he wanted, even to his pick of the dragoon horses. Among the six or eight men

who took part with him were three—Henry Miller, Christopher Miller and a man named May—who like himself, had been taken prisoners when young and grown to manhood among the Indians.

On one occasion, while Wayne was building Fort Defiance, he wished to ascertain the intentions of the enemy, and he sent Wells, with his corps, to bring in another prisoner. Setting off, dressed and painted, as usual with them, in the Indian fashion, they went down the Maumee to the Indian village, opposite to Fort Meigs. Riding boldly into the village, as if they had come from the British fort, they were readily taken for Indians who had come from a distance to take part in the expected battle. Entering into conversation with the red men in their own language, they picked up considerable information, and then passed through the village. About half a mile therefrom they met an Indian and squaw returning from hunting, and mounted on horseback. They made prisoners of these, and started on the return to the fort. On their way they came upon a large encampment of warriors, who were merrily amusing themselves about their

camp-fires. Tying and gagging their prisoners they rode boldly into the camp, with their rifles lying upon the pommels of their saddles. They inquired of the Indians what they heard of Wayne and the movements of his army, and how soon and where the battle would be fought. The Indians standing about Wells and his party were very communicative, and answered all their questions without any suspicion of deceit on the part of their visitors.

At length an Indian, who was sitting at a distance, remarked to another in an undertone, and in another language, that he thought these visitors had mischief in their heads. Captain Wells overheard the remark, and gave the signal agreed upon. Each one fired the contents of his rifle into the body of an Indian at a distance of not more than six paces, and then, putting spurs to their horses, lay with their breasts down to their necks, so as to lessen the mark to fire at, and darted off at their utmost speed. The moment the Indian had made the remark, he and his comrades had risen to their feet with their rifles in their hands, but not before each of the spies had shot his man. A volley of balls followed them

as they fled, one of which struck McClellan under the shoulder-blade, while the arm of Wells was broken by another, and his rifle dropped from his grasp. May was chased to the smooth rock on the Maumee River, where his horse falling, he was taken prisoner. The others escaped unhurt, and rode full speed to the spot where they left their captives, mounted them, and pushed for camp. Wells and McClellan, being severely wounded, and their progress being slow, a messenger was despatched in advance for a surgeon and a guard. As soon as he arrived, with an account of the wounds and perilous situation of these faithful spies, very great sympathy was manifested. Wayne's feelings for the suffering soldier were at all times quick and sensitive. We can then imagine the intensity of his solicitude when informed of the sufferings and perils of this, his confidential and chosen band. He instantly despatched a surgeon and a company of his swiftest dragoons, to meet, assist, and guard these brave fellows to headquarters, where they arrived in due time, and the wounded soon recovered.

May was recognized by his captives as

having once been an Indian and his fate was sealed. They told him a day or two before the battle, "We know you. You speak Indian language. You not content to live with us. Tomorrow we take you to that tree," pointing to a very large burr-oak at the edge of the clearing, near the British fort, "we will tie you up and make a mark on your breast and try which Indian can shoot nearest to it." Accordingly the next day he was led forth, a mark made on his breast, and his body riddled with at least fifty bullets. This ended poor May. He died like a brave man, showing no signs of fear.

This little band of spies, during the campaign, performed more real service than any other corps of equal numbers belonging to the army. They brought in, at different times, not less than twenty prisoners, and killed more than an equal number. As they had no rivals in the army, they aimed in each excursion to outdo their former exploits. What confidence, what self-possession was displayed by these men in their terrific encounters! To ride boldly into the enemy's camp, in full view of their blazing camp-fires,

and enter into conversation with them without betraying the least signs of confusion or trepidation, and openly commence the work of death, proves how well their nerves were steeled against fear. They had come off unscathed in so many desperate conflicts that they had become callous of danger. Captain Wells was killed in the massacre at Chicago in 1812.

THE MANIAC DEFENDER—A STORY OF THE BORDER

SEVENTY years ago Tennessee was disputed ground between the Chickasaws and Choctaws and many a bloody battle was fought between the rival nations. Among the early settlers, who cut down with the strong arm of labor the mighty giants of the forest and erected the first log cabins on the clearings, was one General James Robertson, who won for himself the title of the "Father of West Tennessee." He was then a middle-aged man, but as active and strong as he had been in his youth, and, by his intrepidity and strength, had won the respect if not the love of the neighboring Indians.

In the summer of 1792 a conference was held upon his farm between the tribes of the Chickasaws and Choctaws for the purpose of adjusting those differences that had caused the effusion of so much blood. The Cherokee chiefs and warriors attended ostensibly with peaceful intentions, but, as the course of

events subsequently declared, for the purpose of ascertaining when and where an attack might be successfully made.

Timereor, one of the most noted of the Cherokee warriors, was heard to mutter that "before the leaves fell an attack would be made on one of the white settlements." General Robertson heard the intimation with some alarm, for he knew the determined character of the red men, and he did not know at what point the attack would be made. The settlers, however, were induced to prepare for the worst, and the stations were placed in as good a state of defence as their means would allow.

Immediately on the road leading from Nashville to the encampment of the Cherokees and about four miles from the settlement, was Buchanan's station. This fort consisted of a few log cabins on a hill on the right bank of Mill Creek, rudely constructed and surrounded by a slender palisade. Major Buchanan, its brave defender, who had attended the council at Robertson's farm, invited several of the Cherokee warriors to accompany him to the fort. They carefully examined its situation

and inquired closely concerning its strength and means of resistance, and Timereor several times remarked to Major Buchanan that in case of a surprise it could make but a feeble resistance. Buchanan, however, concealed many of the weaknesses of the station and particularly deceived the Indian as to its strength and the manner in which it was guarded, for his experience told him the crafty Indian would take every advantage.

The warriors left the fort at nightfall and communicated all they had seen and heard to their companions and arranged the plot which resulted in defeat and death. Major Buchanan gave orders that a stout watch should be maintained for the future, that sentinels should be posted in the most accessible places, and the gates barred and locked at sundown. Arms and ammunition were collected in quantities, and every preparation made for a midnight assault.

July and August passed without an alarm. The Indians remained quietly in their encampment without any apparent purpose of hostility, yet Major Buchanan did not suffer himself to be deceived. The sentinels performed their

many duties, the gates were closed at an early hour, and the magazine and storehouse were well filled.

On the first of September, 1792, two men, who had resided for years in the forest among the Cherokees, and well knew the artifices of the red men, arrived at the fort. These were Joseph Durant, a Frenchman by birth, and Dick Fendlestone, a half-breed Cherokee. They said it was decided to attack Buchanan's station about the twentieth of that month, and if successful to march upon the other station, and finally fall upon Nashville. This news Buchanan immediately communicated to his superior officer, General Robertson, who ordered out the militia of the neighborhood, and, in obedience to his instruction, three hundred men well armed and equipped, marched to Rain's station.

Among them was a man of bold, daring spirit, well acquainted with woodcraft, named Abraham Castleman, who was despatched as a spy. Castleman proceeded to Black Fox Camp, near the present town of Murfreesboro, where he discovered the fresh tracks of moccasined feet. Knowing these must be the hos-

tile body of Indians, he returned, and confirmed the report of Durant and Fendlestone. But the time fixed by them for the plot passed, and the chief, a half-breed named Watts, a man who was distinguished for his humanity and magnanimity, had repeatedly assured Governor Blount of his peaceful intentions, and the settlers at Rain's station began to think themselves mistaken, and the troops were disbanded and returned home.

On the twenty-sixth of the month, however, Major Buchanan sent out Jonathan Gee, Seward Clayton and Reginald Clarke, men of great skill in woodcraft, as spies. They proceeded some distance, when they met a body of men dressed in the usual frontier fashion, who made signs for them to join them. The unsuspecting men swam a stream that divided them, and were met on the opposite shore by Watts and his braves, dressed after the fashion of the whites. In vain the unfortunate wretches threw themselves on the mercy of Watts. The tomahawk of Timereor and the chief waved brightly in the sunshine, and sank with terrible force on the unprotected heads of the unhappy prisoners, and the bleeding

bodies were thrown in the blue waters of the river. Those at the fort remained in ignorance of the terrible fate of the scouts, and even Buchanan began to waver in his idea of intended treachery, and omitted the usual precaution of stationing sentinels upon the walls.

The last of September was one of those beautiful days in autumn, when the mist which lingers about the earth increases rather than veils the loveliness of Nature, when the leaves are changing to rainbow hues, and the purple grape hangs in rich clusters on the bending vine. Upon that peaceful picture it seemed no stealthy savage would dare intrude, with death and desolation in train. The merry joke and laugh circulated freely, for the inhabitants had cast off all gloomy apprehensions, and every heart rejoiced in the beauty of the glorious autumn. Children passed in and out of the gate with song and shout, never thinking of danger.

In one of the block houses sat two women, the wives of Gee and Clarke. Mrs. Gee was a rosy-cheeked, black-eyed woman, of perhaps forty, a daughter of the forest and well inured to the dangers of the frontier. Mary Clarke,

the wife of a year, gentle and timid, had lived all her life long in a city, where danger was unthought of, and border outrage a thing to be read of in the newspapers. Like a true wife, she had followed the fortunes of her young husband when his lot was cast among scenes of death and violence.

"What is the matter, Mary? You hardly speak, but sit there with your eyes fixed on the hills as though you expected a redskin to jump at you. I tell you what. I don't believe this story of Joe Durant's. The redskins can't be very near or Jonathan wouldn't stay out. He's been gone three days now, and he must be in to-morrow," said Mrs. Gee, a little anxiously, for her husband's absence was not so uncommon that she should be seriously alarmed.

"Suppose they never come back, Nancy?"

"What do you mean, Mary? Who has been putting such nonsense in your head?"

"No one. Don't laugh at me, and I will tell you a dream I had last night."

"A dream! What, are you fretting over a bad dream? You ought not to do that now."

"I can't help it; the dream was so lifelike that I must believe it."

"Well, what was it? Tell me about it."

"I dreamed," said Mary Clarke, drawing her shawl closer about her, shuddering as she spoke, "I dreamed I saw Reginald, with your husband and Clayton, walking along by the bank of a river."

"Well there's nothing alarming in that."

"Wait a moment. That was indeed nothing; but it seemed after awhile that other men came on the opposite bank, and beckoned them to cross. There were many of them and some wore moccasins of the Indians and their knives and tomahawks were concealed beneath their hunter's dress. I saw our scouts plunge boldly into the dark waters of the river; I saw them reach the opposite bank—and, O Nancy, pray Heaven it is not true—I saw them reach the shore, and climb up the steep bank; and then I heard the terrible war-whoop of the redskins ring out plainly on the waters, and saw the terrible features of Timereor, and the half-breed Cherokee chief, Watts, concealed beneath the cap of the hunter, and I saw the Indians surround their captives, singing and dancing with horrible glee. I saw tomahawks glitter in the air. I saw them fall, and heard

the one wild cry of 'Mary' burst from Reginald's lips as he sank, all mangled and dying, at the feet of the chief. After the horrid work was done, the Indians threw the bodies into the river. I saw the waters close over them, and I awoke. But, oh! the memory of that dream has been with me all day. I cannot take any peace until Reginald returns."

"You really must not let an idle dream trouble you, Mary. The major does not fear an attack, and nobody believes Joe Durant's story; he is nothing but a lying Frenchman; and as for Dick Fendlestone, the half-breed, there's more red blood in his veins than in the chief's if I am not mistaken," returned Mrs. Gee, cheerfully, for she was anxious to conceal the impression her friend's words had made on her own mind.

Poor Mary sighed. "Yes, I know I am not really superstitious. I have no faith in signs and omens, but this seems almost like a revelation."

"Well, they must come in to-morrow. The major thinks they have followed up the trail to the encampment, and that's more than one day's walk from the fort."

"God grant they may come!" said Mary, softly, as her eyes rested on the delicate work on her lap.

Mrs. Gee arose and went to the door, looking out over the hills, in vain hope of seeing the returning scouts in the distance. Mary looked up with an anxious glance of inquiry, and, meeting no sign of affirmation, plied her needle in silence, while a few hot tears fell softly. Then she struggled bravely to turn her thoughts from that terrible vision that was ever before her eyes, and prayed silently for strength to bear whatever might be in store for her in the future.

So the long, warm afternoon passed by; the sun went down in cloudless glory, with the promise of a lovely to-morrow, and the full moon climbed slowly in the radiant sky. The sounds of busy life grew still at last, and only the note of the whip-poor-will, the chirp of the cricket, or the hoot of the night owl, mingled with the plash of gliding water, and the rustle and quiver of the forest leaves. The stars twinkled dimly in the far-off blue, and the moonbeams fell gently on the placid bosom of the sweeping river, moving onward, with scarce a

ripple, to meet at last the mighty "Father of Waters."

Winding slowly among the trees in the forest, their faces begrimmed with the hideous war-paint, and the stern resolve of the warrior stamped upon each swarthy feature, marched a body of Cherokees and Shawnees, commanded by the infuriated Watts. The soldiers of the fort were locked in peaceful slumber, the sentinels removed; the path of the red men seemed open and easy.

Of all that fort contained, only one, the widowed Mary Clarke, kept watch on that fated night. With her faithful Rover stretched at her feet, the young watcher scanned from her window the homeward path, which he for whom she looked might never travel again. Suddenly, in the distance where the shadows were deepest, she saw something moving. Hope whispered cheerfully in her ear of the gallant young scout's return, and she strained her eyes to their utmost to catch another glimpse of the objects in the distance. Soon, however, she perceived, instead of three, there were hundreds moving noiselessly around the base of the hill; sometimes, when the wind

moved the boughs aside, she seemed to see the flash of weapons in the struggling moonbeams. Rover, too, seemed restless, and every now and then he would sniff the air, and then drop his head into his mistress' lap with a low growl.

Mary Clarke watched the shadows until they emerged into the moonlight, and she clearly perceived they were Indians, and in large force, probably seven or eight hundred, while the little garrison consisted of only twenty men, with their wives and children—less than fifty souls, shut up within four wooden walls.

Rover, roused by the sight of the approaching danger, began barking furiously, and his mistress perceived that the main body stopped, and detached a part of their number, who passed on silently in the direction of the fort.

But the noble dog had faithfully performed his duty. Lights flashed from loopholes and narrow windows, which told plainly that the unsuspecting garrison slept lightly, and were soon aroused. Mary saw two men come out of the block house, and, calling to them, she told them the cause of the sudden alarm. Their answer was firm and noble, and worthy

of the pioneers of the new country: "Let the redskins come. We will die to a man before we surrender the fort to the half-breed Watts and his rascals," and simultaneously they discharged their muskets. The Indians returned the fire, happily without effect.

The woods rang with the terrible war-whoop, and the little garrison was surrounded by the dusky warriors in their war-paint, and decorated with the insignia of the war-path. Part of the Shawnee tribe, led by their own chief, Mockingehock, accompanied the Cherokees, and, had they known the feebleness of the little fort, all within it had been slaughtered without mercy. The human fiends surrounded the building, climbing the palisade, and attempting many times to set fire to it; but as often as they ventured they were shot down by unerring marksmen, who felt that their own lives and the lives of their families depended on their intrepidity and coolness. Fortunately, there was an abundant supply of ammunition, and the soldiers lost no opportunity of using it to effect. The women, actuated by the knowledge that worse than death would befall them if they became prisoners,

resolved to conquer. Not an instance of female tenderness was shown in that terrible hour; not a hand trembled as it pointed the deadly rifle; not a muscle quivered when the report was followed by the shriek and death-groan of the enemy.

The American women of that time, born and bred on the frontier, accustomed to the horrors of Indian warfare, played their parts courageously. The American women of to-day in East Tennessee, if their wrongs and hardships were written, have done a noble duty. Against armies flushed with triumph, flaunting the bonny blue flag, and the red, white and red, against scoffs and robberies, and murder committed upon their own hearthstones, they have kept their faith in the government, certain there would come a time when that government would stretch out a powerful arm, and save them from the barbarities of the rebel hordes. All honor to the noble women of the Revolution—the wives and mothers of our heroes—who gave us this great inheritance of ours. But threefold honor to the suffering women of the rebellion, who stood true to the glorious old Union.

Once a warrior sprang over the palisade, and applied a torch to one of the outhouses, which was built of light and inflammable wood; as he turned to give the yell of defiance, the bullet of Mary Clarke was buried deep in his heart, and the crafty Timereor was seen to leap in the air, and then fall upon the torch he had lain down, the weight of his body smothering the flame.

From the first moment of the attack, Mary Clarke had watched for him, the monster who had murdered her husband. Her rifle was loaded for him; she had sworn vengeance on him alone. Her gentle, timid nature was turned into stone; her one wild prayer was that the chief should fall by her hand.

A wild laugh burst from her lips as she beheld the stalwart figure of the bloodthirsty villain fall motionless upon the torch he carried—a laugh that was heard above the din without. Many an eye turned sadly upon her, a tear fell on many a rough, sunburnt cheek and many a bold, honest heart ached for her young life blighted in its prime.

Nancy Gee whispered to her neighbors, tears standing in her dark, bright eyes: "Poor thing,

poor thing! I am afraid her dream is true, after all. Jonathan will never come back; these bloody redskins have killed him."

"I'll go and speak to her," said Lucy Forbes, dropping the rifle she held and walking towards the unhappy girl. "Come away, Mary", she said soothingly, "the Indians will shoot you through the loophole. Come!" And she tried to draw the poor creature away.

"Let me alone!" shrieked the young wife. "He is coming—the greatest villain of the whole. He murdered Reginald. I saw him do it and I'll shoot him."

"Who is it, Mary?"

"The Cherokee, Watts. See, there in the shadow under the trees is Reginald. Look! How bloody are his clothes and how pale his face is! He told me that Watts killed him and bade me take revenge and I will have it." And again the maniac's laugh rang above the Indian shouts and the crash of musketry—a laugh that every soul in the fort heard with a shudder, knowing but too surely what it meant.

"He will come, ha, ha! He comes when we call him, Reginald and I; ha, ha, ha!" laughed the maniac hoarsely as the Shawnee chief,

Mockingehock, fell, pierced through the heart, on the cold body of Timereor. Watts perceived the danger and started to return to his tribe, but Mary Clarke seized the rifle of a soldier near her and again the sharp crack sounded through the fort. The right arm of the Indian fell useless by his side and, raising a yell of discomfiture, he climbed the palings and rejoined his tribe.

The face of affairs was changed. Watts, convinced of his mistake and severely wounded, called off his warriors to a hurried council, after a serious attack of an hour, during which time he had lost many of his best warriors and his ally, Mockingehock. The loss was never accurately ascertained, but at a subsequent meeting Watts admitted that thirty were killed, which was probably about half of the true number. In the fort, only one man, Michael O'Connor, an Irishman, was wounded by his own blunderbuss, into which he had carelessly put a double charge. Sullenly the defeated Indians filed homeward, carrying with them a large quantity of corn and driving before them several hogs, the only booty they had been able to secure.

By this repulse Nashville was saved and the Indians had received a signal check. It afterwards appeared that Watts had objected to the midnight surprise and advanced another plan—that of remaining in concealment near the fort until the gates were opened, and the gallant defenders off their guard and then rushing in; Mockingehock, on the other hand, favored the midnight attack, without a doubt of an easy contest and then marching directly to Nashville, where he expected to find rich booty. Fortunately, the Shawnee's plans were followed and he forfeited his own life as the price of his temerity.

Of Mary Clarke our tale is short. When the gates were opened, she was the first to sally out and closely watched the soldiers as they buried the slain warriors. When Timereor's remains were deposited in the earth, she fled towards the river, crying, "I killed him, but the other escaped." And flinging on the winds that horrible maniac laugh, which froze the blood in the veins to hear, down the slope she fled, swifter than those who followed her could have dreamed possible. "Yes, yes, 'twas I—I did it; ha, ha, ha, ha!"

Down, down with terrible speed, till she reached the river's brink, then, with one spring, she sank into the turbid waters. Strong arms struck out after her, but, when the faithful dog bore his dripping burden to the shore, life was extinct.

Years of peace have followed—years that changed the face of Nature and brought destruction and desolation to the homes of the red man. Now and then, away up among the mountains, some refugees from rebel authority, in their rude huts, screening their ruddy fire from observation, hear from the lips of the patriarch of the group the story of the Indian assault, but the recent march of events has obliterated, for the time, the memory of the deeds of the olden time. But the future historian, writing of the perils and sufferings of these devoted men, will find descendants of Buchanan and Robertson and of the scouts, Gee and Clayton, among those who perilled all rather than fight under the stars and bars.

THE PROVIDENTIAL INTERFERENCE

THE following adventure of Mr. Francis Downing presents a remarkable instance of the narrow escapes from impending death, which were of almost daily occurrence in the experience of the hardy and fearless pioneers of the West.

Near the banks of Slate Creek, in Bath County, Kentucky, there stood, at the period of our story, one of those stations or forts which were erected by the earlier settlers of that section of the country, to protect themselves from the savages, who, with a patriotism which would have been lauded to the skies, had their skins been white instead of red, endeavored to beat back the tide of emigration which was pouring from the older states, and threatened the integrity of their hunting grounds and the sanctity of their burial places. It consisted, as was usual with such erections, of a series of cabins, connected by palisades, and protected by blockhouses at the corners, which effectually guarded the fort from assault by an enemy

without artillery, and the instance was seldom known of such a station being captured, except by stratagem, treachery or famine.

The inmates of the little fort on Slate Creek, although they felt comparatively safe from invasion, did not cease altogether their vigilance; for bitter experience had taught them, as it had others, that at no time was the implacable hostility of the Indians more to be dreaded than when their presence was least expected. Four years had passed away since that fearful massacre at Blue Licks, where so many of the brave fighting men of Kentucky had lost their lives, and the expedition of Colonel Clarke into the Miami country had chastised the Indians so severely, and during that period no considerable force of the enemy had been seen within the borders of the state. An occasional foray would be made, however, by small bands of three or four warriors, who, after killing some exposed or venturesome settler, and running off his animals, would retreat hastily to the other side of the Ohio, where they would be safe from the pursuit of the white man. This had continued during all the period embraced between the years 1782

and 1786; but as these incursions became less frequent, and the tide of immigration flowing in a steady stream into the State gave an increased confidence and boldness to the settlers, they threw off the restraint in which they had so long been held, and resumed, to some extent, their agricultural avocations. The settlement of Ohio on the north had served in a measure to throw a bulwark between them and the northern tribes, while the settlements of Holston and Watauga, in the present state of Tennessee, protected them from the Creeks and Cherokees on the south, and, being thus sheltered from invasion, it is not surprising that many of those brave spirits who had shown such contempt for danger, when surrounded by clouds of enemies on every side, should lay aside their caution and watchfulness, and roam the woods with a freedom little short of temerity.

Among other inmates of the station on Slate Creek was a man by the name of Yates, who was a fair specimen of the fighting men of the borders. Of a wild, reckless disposition, brave even unto rashness, with keen perceptive faculties, and undaunted under all

circumstances, he was a universal favorite with all who knew him, for, true as the tempered steel, he was never known to desert a friend in distress, or reap advantage at the expense of another. Although not yet arrived at middle age, his experience in woodcraft made him an oracle to the younger men of the garrison, while his qualities of head and heart made him respected by those older than himself.

One morning in August, Yates missed his horse from the range where he had left him grazing the night previous. The idea that he had been stolen never once entered his mind, but, thinking he had strayed into the forest which stretched to an interminable distance in every direction about the fort, he made preparations as soon as the morning meal was over to go in search of him. For the sake of company, he solicited a young man, by the name of Downing, to accompany him. Ready at all times for a tramp or a hunt, young Downing consented with alacrity; and, taking their rifles on their arms, the two sauntered forth into the woods. Over hills and through valleys, now threading their way along a

of water course, anon climbing the rocky sides some rugged hill to gain a more extensive view, they sought and sought in vain for the lost animal, until hope of finding him failed, and reluctantly they turned their steps homeward.

When they had come to the conclusion to give up the search, at least for the present, they found themselves in a quiet and secluded valley, some six miles or more from the station. As this was but an hour's walk, however, they commenced their return, with light and cheerful hearts, little dreaming of danger or of the scenes they had yet to pass through before they reached their home. Yates, thoughtless and reckless, amused himself by humming the bars of some patriotic ditty in vogue at the period, occasionally breaking out into boisterous song, and making the woods ring with his rude music, while his younger companion listened or commented, as the spirit moved him. His attention was attracted, however, before they proceeded far, by certain sounds which alarmed him; but fearing the ridicule of his comrade, and thinking that *his* ear should have been the first to recognize the vi-

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QUICK AS THOUGHT, BOTH THE BEAR AND THE INDIAN WERE UPON THEIR FEET.

cinity of a foe, he abstained from mentioning his fears, for he had an overweening confidence in the talent of the other as a scout, and cowardice at that time was a crime, little short, in point of obloquy, to that of murder. He endeavored to account for the sounds, therefore, by ascribing to them natural causes; but still they haunted him, and he could not rid his mind of the impression that danger hung around their path. When he found that the noises seemed to follow them, and that his companion was too much absorbed in his performance to notice them, he called his attention to them. As he had anticipated, his feeling of alarm was made sport of by Yates, who laughed at his idle fears, and told him to rest quiet—that "the worst thing there was in these yere woods was a bar or painter," and "he'd just like to meet one, to take home in place of the horse," which he had so confidently anticipated taking home with him. For a time Downing seemed content; but he could not but notice whichever way they turned, and how farsoever they proceeded, the ominous sounds still followed them; and he again called the attention of Yates, and

endeavored to make him realize that their footsteps were dogged by some unseen enemy. His only answer was:

"Pshaw, boy, you're timid; you ain't afraid that the redskins are after your hair, are ye? What valey do you set on your scalp, that you're so afraid of it? I'll agree to insure it for ye for sixpence. Wagh! I'll wager a buckskin against a coonskin there ain't an Ingen this side the 'Hio. If there is, I'd jest like to look at him along this straight-edge," slapping his rifle; "I haint had a scrimmage for so long I'm gittin most froze for hair."

Downing was not satisfied, however, by the bantering of his companion; and, as the rustling of leaves and the occasional crackling of a twig was heard in the rear, he determined, if his companion did not evince more watchfulness, he would shift for himself. They were entering a canebrake as he had formed this resolution, and before they had reached the other side of it he had become fully satisfied, in his own mind, that some wild animal or Indian was following their trail. As they emerged from the shelter of the brake, therefore, and entered a wood which was thickly

undergrown by luxuriant clumps of whortleberry bushes, he seized a favorable opportunity and, darting into the bushes, concealed himself, while his comrade, who was still so much taken up with the music of his own voice as not to heed his absence, continued on down the slope of a hill, and was soon lost to his view. Downing had not remained long in his bushy retreat before, to his unspeakable horror, he saw two painted warriors put aside the canes and look out earnestly in the direction Yates had gone. Fearful lest they might have seen him dart into the bushes, he made up his mind to fire upon them and trust to his heels for safety. As they emerged into the open space, therefore, he raised his rifle to his shoulder, but before he had time to take aim it accidentally went off. He was not slow in following the example of the piece, and met Yates returning. The latter had been called to a recognition of his absence by the report of the gun, and was running back to ascertain the cause of his firing. It was unnecessary to ask the question, however, for the enemy were in full view, and coming up with them at full speed. As

Downing's rifle was empty—Yates' too, for aught we know—it was decided to run for it; but as Downing was by no means as rapid in his movements as his companion, the latter ran by his side, graduating his speed to that of the young man, refusing to save his own life by outstripping him. The enemy were rapidly overtaking them, and, as if fortune were against them, the white men took a path which curved like a bow, while the Indians, well acquainted with the country, took another, much nearer, which bore the same relation to the first that the string does to the bow.

The two paths, at the greatest distance, were no more than a hundred yards apart, so that Yates and Downing could see that the Indians were rapidly decreasing the distance which separated them, and it required the utmost stretch of their powers to reach the point of convergence in advance. They were successful in doing so, however, although the enemy were so close upon their heels that they momentarily expected to feel the edge of their tomahawks.

Before them lay a deep and wide gully, which extended to some hundred yards or

more on either side of the path and at right angles therewith. It was necessary to cross this or retrace their steps, and, as the last was impracticable, the two fugitives gathered all their energies for the effort necessary to spring across it. The Indians, perfectly well aware of this obstacle, also, made for a spot higher up, where it was more shallow, for the purpose of gaining ground and heading them off. In this they would most assuredly have succeeded but for an accident which occurred to Downing, which proved to be a most fortunate one, although he viewed it in a far different light for the moment. Yates being possessed of greater strength, agility and endurance than his younger companion, sprang over the gully with ease, but Downing exhausted by the great efforts he had already made, came short, and striking his breast with considerable force upon the opposite side, fell back and rolled to the bottom, with the breath almost completely beaten out of his body by the force of the blow. For a moment the generous Yates hesitated at leaving his comrade in his emergency, but the sight of the Indians, now fast approaching to cut him

off, and the thought that his remaining would only sacrifice the life of both, decided him, and bounding off at his utmost speed, he was soon again in advance of his pursuers, who, either not discovering the condition of Downing, or being intent on the capture of his more stalwart companion, followed in his trail. Downing had given himself up as lost when he fell, and doggedly remained lying at the bottom of the gully; but hearing the fast retreating sounds of the pursuit, he recovered his energies, and resolved to make another effort for life. Fearing lest the enemy should see him if he left the gully at once, he walked along the bottom at a rapid pace, in the hope of finding some hiding-place where he could be secure from discovery until the enemy had departed.

The gully, which became more shallow, however, as he proceeded, soon quite disappeared in the level ground, and ceased to afford him shelter or protection. Knowing that the Indians would return under any circumstances to look for him, and hoping to make a detour so as to avoid them, he went on; but before emerging from the shelter of the ditch he made

a reconnoissance. To his surprise and horror he beheld one of the warriors, apparently in quest of his whereabouts, approaching him, and not more than a hundred and fifty yards from his retreat. With the utmost consternation, too, he discovered his egregious folly in not having reloaded his rifle while he had the opportunity to do so. No expert woodsman would have been caught in this dilemma, it being their first care to reload after firing, where there is a possibility of doing so. Indeed, the Wetzels, and many others, acquired skill sufficient to reload while running at the utmost speed, and this efficiency in the use of their pieces was the means of saving their lives on several occasions. Young Downing had but little time afforded him in which to make up his mind as to the course he should pursue. The Indian—whether he had discovered him or not, he did not know—was making directly for the spot where he was, and, since to retrace his steps down the gully might bring him upon the other one, he resolved to try his chance in flight. Throwing down his gun, which was now a useless burden, he started out upon the level ground and ran in a direction directly op-

posite to that in which his enemy was coming. A shrill yell announced that he was discovered, and urged him to put forth his utmost powers in the race. Plying his legs manfully, therefore, he for some little time held his own, but coming to a ridge which it was necessary to ascend his speed proved not equal to that of his pursuer whom, to his horror, he found was rapidly gaining upon him.

As he found that the contest of speed was fast drawing to a close, and that a few moments would end it in his death, his heart sank within him, and he was on the point of giving over and yielding himself to the tomahawk, when he discovered an immense poplar tree, which had been blown up by the roots and lay at an angle with the course he was pursuing. Darting around the head of it, he ran along one side towards the roots, which, with the interstices between them filled with soil that had adhered to them, rose high in the air, leaving a pit or hole of considerable dimensions, where they had formerly reposed. The Indian followed the other side of the tree, doubtless in the confident anticipation of intercepting

Downing at the roots, but he was destined to meet with a reception which he little dreamed of, and one which seemed to show a direct interposition of Providence in aid of the young hunter, who now had nothing but some such interposition to depend upon for his life. It seems that a large she bear, in her peregrinations through the forest, had made a temporary bed at the foot of the fallen poplar, in which to suckle her little litter of cubs, and, while engaged in this interesting maternal office, the Indian, being first at the spot, and darting around the roots without due attention to the maxim, "Look before you leap," sprang directly upon and stumbled over the hirsute group. Quick as thought both the bear and Indian were upon their feet, and a terrific battle commenced between them. The brute seemed determined to embrace her antagonist in one of the most affectionate hugs, while he, declining the honor, plied his knife with the utmost activity in the effort to stab her to the heart. It may readily be supposed that Downing did not wait to see the end of the contest, but, thankful for this providen-

tial interference in his behalf, hurried off in the direction of the fort, where he soon arrived in safety, and found his older companion resting himself from the fatigue of the race he had had.

TOM HIGGINS RESCUING HIS COMRADE

During the war of 1812, Tom Higgins, as he was called by his comrades, enlisted in the Rangers—a company of mounted men organized expressly for the purpose of protecting the inhabitants of the western frontier. He was one of a party of twelve men, commanded by Lieutenant Journey, and posted at Hill's station, a small stockade fort about three miles south of where the village of Greenville, Illinois, now stands, and about twenty miles from Vandalia, neither of which towns were then settled, the whole country for miles around being nothing but a vast wilderness.

On the 30th of August, 1814, signs of Indians were seen about half a mile from the fort, and at night the savages were discovered prowling around, but no alarm was given. Early on the following morning, Lieutenant Journey, with a part of his men, started in pursuit of the Indians. Passing around a field of corn which adjoined the fort, they crossed the prairie, and had proceeded

but a short distance when, in crossing a ridge covered with a hazel thicket, in full view of the fort, they fell into an ambuscade of a large party of Indians, numbering some seventy or eighty, who suddenly rose around them and fired, killed four of the party, among whom was Lieutenant Journey, and badly wounded another; the rest fled, with the exception of Higgins.

The morning of a sultry day was just beginning to dawn. A heavy dew had fallen the preceding night, and the air was still humid, causing the smoke from the guns to hang in heavy clouds over the spot; and under cover of these clouds the remaining companions of Higgins had escaped, believing that all who were left were dead, or that at any rate it would be useless to attempt to rescue them from such superior numbers. Tom's horse had fallen upon his knees several times, and believing him to be severely wounded he dismounted; but upon examination he found he was only shot in the neck, and not seriously disabled. He still retained his hold on the bridle, and, as he now felt sure of being able to retreat in safety, he determined to have one

more shot at the savages to avenge his comrades. He looked around for a shelter, but could see only one small elm, for which he started; just at that moment the smoke lifted, disclosing to his view a number of Indians, who had not yet discovered him. One of them stood only a few paces from him, loading his gun.

Tom instantly raised his gun to his shoulder, and taking aim, fired, and brought him to the ground. Being still concealed by the smoke, he reloaded his gun, mounted his horse, and turned to fly, when a faint voice hailed him with, "Tom, you won't leave me, will you?"

On looking round to see from whom the voice proceeded, he discovered it to be one of his comrades named Burgess, who was wounded, lying on the ground, and unable to move; he instantly replied, "No, I'll not leave you; come along, and I'll take care of you."

"I can't come," replied Burgess. "My leg is smashed all to pieces."

Higgins sprang from his saddle, and finding his ankle bone broken took him in his arms and attempted to put him on his horse, tell-

ing him at the same time to make the best of his way to the fort. But the horse taking fright at the same instant started off, leaving Tom and his wounded comrade behind. Still Tom's coolness and bravery did not desert him, and setting Burgess down he said, "Now, my good fellow, you must hop off on three legs, while I stay between you and the Indians, to keep them off," giving him instructions, at the same time, to get into the highest grass, and keep close to the ground as possible.

Burgess followed his advice, and escaped unnoticed to the fort.

The clouds of smoke still hung thick around Higgins, hiding him from the enemy and as he plunged through it, he left it with the ridge and the hazel thicket between him and the Indians. He was retreating unobserved by them, and if he had taken a direct course towards the fort might easily have effected his escape. But his friend was slowly crawling away in that direction, and the noble fellow, after coolly surveying the whole ground, saw that, if he pursued the same course, and should be discovered, his friend, being unable to defend himself, would most likely be sacri-

ficed. He therefore determined to take a circuitous route, and by drawing attention to himself, he hoped he might save his friend. Carrying out his design, he moved stealthily through the bushes, intending, when he emerged, to run at full speed. But as he left the thicket he discovered a large Indian near him, and two others between himself and the fort. Tom stood coolly surveying his foes, and considering the best course to pursue under existing circumstances. Although confident in his own powers, but surrounded with enemies, he still considered it necessary to act with caution. Wishing to separate them, he started at full speed for a ravine not far off, but soon found he should be unable to reach it, from the effect of a wound in one of his legs, which until now he had scarcely noticed. The largest Indian was close upon his heels, and Tom turned several times to fire, but the Indian would stop and dance about to spoil his aim. Tom was aware he could not afford to lose a shot by firing at random. The other two were now fast coming up with him, and he found that unless he could dispose of the larger one he must inevitably be over-

powered. He therefore stopped, determined to receive a fire. Facing his foe, he watched his eye while the Indian, raising his gun, fired; but Tom, cool and wary, just as he thought his finger touched the trigger, suddenly threw his side to him, and by this means probably saved his life; for the ball, which would otherwise have entered his body, was lodged in his thigh.

Tom fell, but instantly rose again and ran, and the largest Indian, now certain of his prey, loaded again, and with the two others started in pursuit. They soon came up with Tom, who had again fallen, and as he rose they all fired, lodging three balls in his body. Being now weak from loss of blood and great exertions, he fell and rose again several times, when the Indians, throwing away their guns, rushed upon him with spears and knives, but upon his presenting his gun at one or the other of them, they fell back; until the largest, probably thinking from Tom's reserving fire so long that his gun was unloaded, boldly rushed up to him, when Tom, with a steady aim, fired and shot him dead.

A FAINT VOICE HAILED HIM WITH "TOM, YOU WON'T LEAVE ME, WILL YOU?"

Almost any other man, under like circumstances, with four bullets in his body, and an empty gun in his hands, would have given up in despair. But Tom Higgins had not the slightest idea of it. The largest and most formidable of the three was now out of his way, and of the other two he had but little fear, having seen from their eyes that he was their superior in courage and strength. He therefore faced them, and began loading his rifle. They raised their whoop and rushed on him. In telling the story, Tom said:

"They kept their distance as long as my rifle was loaded, but when they knew it was empty they were braver soldiers."

A fierce and bloody conflict now ensued. The Indians, rushing on Tom, stabbed him in many places; but fortunately for him, their spears were nothing but small green poles, cut hastily for the occasion, and bent whenever the point came in contact with Tom's ribs, or one of his tough muscles. In consequence of his continued exertions with his hands and rifle in warding off their thrusts, the wounds were not deep, but his chest, and indeed his whole front, was covered

with gashes, the scars of which always remained, in proof of his courage and skill.

At last one of them threw his hatchet, the edge of which struck Tom in the cheek, passing through the ear, which it severed, laying bare his skull to the back of his head, and stretching him on the ground. The Indians rushed in, but Tom, cool as ever, was still enough for them, and kept them off with his feet and hands until he at length succeeded in grasping one of their spears, which, as the Indian attempted to withdraw, aided him to rise; and clubbing his rifle, he struck the nearest of his foes, and dashed out his brains; in doing which he broke the stock, leaving nothing in his hands but the barrel. The other Indian, having until now fought with much caution,—probably considering his character as a warrior at stake, and that to run from a man badly wounded, and almost entirely disarmed, or to suffer him to escape, would subject him to the ridicule of his tribe —uttered a horrid yell, rushed on, and attempted to stab the almost exhausted soldier; but Tom was again too quick for him, and warding off the spear with one hand raised

his rifle barrel with the other. The Indian, not being wounded, was physically much stronger than his adversary, but the moral courage of Tom was too much for him, and quailing beneath the fierce glance of his eagle eye, he began to retreat slowly towards the place where he had dropped his rifle. Tom, feeling that if the Indian recovered his rifle it would be a hopeless case with him, threw away his rifle barrel, and drawing his hunting knife, rushed upon him. A desperate struggle ensued, and several deep cuts were inflicted, but the Indian finally succeeded in casting Tom from him, and ran to the spot where he had thrown his gun, while Tom searched for the gun of the other Indian; thus both, bleeding and almost exhausted, were searching for arms to commence anew the battle.

The smoke that hung between them and the Indians had now cleared away, and some of them having passed the thicket were in full view, and seemingly there was no chance of escape for Tom. Nevertheless, relief was at hand.

The little garrison at the fort, now num-

bering six or eight, had witnessed the whole of this desperate conflict. Among them was a Mrs. Pursley, a woman long familiar with deeds of daring, from having passed much of her time on the borders, and in association with the Rangers—who, seeing Tom bravely fighting with such odds against him, urged the men to go to the rescue. But they, considering the attempt useless the Indians so far outnumbering them, refused to go. The brave woman, declaring that so fine a fellow as Tom should not be scalped for want of help, snatched a rifle out of her husband's hand, and jumping on a horse sallied out to the rescue. The men, ashamed to be outdone by a woman, followed at full speed towards the place of combat. An exciting scene ensued; the Indians at the ridge having just discovered Tom were rushing towards him, swinging their tomahawks, and yelling like very devils; and his companions, urging their horses to the utmost, were trying to reach him first. Tom, exhausted with the loss of blood, had fallen fainting to the earth, while his adversary, too intent on his prey to notice the approach of the Rangers, was searching

for his rifle. The Rangers were the first on the ground.

Mrs. Pursley, knowing Tom's spirit, thought he had thrown himself down in despair at the loss of his rifle and the fearful odds against him. She offered him the one she carried; but Tom was past using it for the present. His friends hastily lifted him up before one of their number, and turned to retreat just as the main body of the Indians came up. They made good their retreat, and the Indians retired without molesting them farther.

After being carried into the fort, Tom remained insensible for several days, and for some time his recovery was doubtful. His friends extracted two of the bullets, leaving two in his thigh, which they were unable to extract, one of which continued to give him much pain for several years, although the wound was healed. At length, hearing that a surgeon had settled within a day's journey of where he was, he went to see him. The surgeon told him he could extract the ball, but charged him the enormous sum of fifty dollars for the operation. This Tom considered exorbitant, and refused to give, as it was more than

one half of his yearly pension. On his way home he thought the matter over, and concluded he could do it himself, and save the expense. Accordingly, on reaching home, he requested his wife to hand him his razor. The ride home had so irritated the parts, that the ball, which at other times could not be discovered, could now be felt. With the assistance of his wife, he deliberately laid open his thigh, until the edge of the razor touched the ball, and then, inserting his two thumbs into the gash, he, as he termed it, "flirted it out without costing a cent." The other ball still remained in his thigh, but caused him no pain, except when he used violent exercise. He continued to be one of the best hunters in the country, and it still took a strong man to handle him.

History nowhere records a nobler and more disinterested act than the one here related. Higgins, having the sure means of escape from what would be considered by most men as almost hopeless peril, unhesitatingly gave it up to a wounded comrade, by offering his horse, and when that intention was defeated by the flight of the horse, and there was still

a chance of retreat for himself, he remained at the hazard of his own life to protect his wounded friend. Were not the facts corroborated, they could hardly be believed.

A ROMANCE OF PIONEER LIFE

When Lord Selkirk attempted to form a colony at the junction of the Pembina and Red rivers, he sent out agents to Scotland and Switzerland, with flattering accounts of the salubrity of the climate, and the fertility of the soil. In consequence of these representations several hundred were induced to emigrate with their families. But they were doomed to severe disappointment. After several years of suffering and privation, the colony was broken up, and those who had not starved, or been killed by the Indians, again emigrated, and settled in Ohio.

Among those who emigrated from Scotland was Duncan Cameron, who traced his lineage back to Sir Evan Dhu. After graduating at the University of Aberdeen, he married the daughter of a farmer in the neighborhood, and became a farmer himself; but with so little success that soon after the death of his wife he gave up the lease of his farm, and sold his stock to pay his debts. After settling up his affairs he found himself

possessed of forty pounds and a beautiful daughter.

At this time he had the good fortune to become acquainted with the Earl of Selkirk, who was in Scotland on business relating to the colony at Pembina, and at once entered into an engagement with him to superintend the interests of the new colony. He embarked with his daughter, and in due time arrived at Montreal, where his situation as superintendent to his lordship procured him many attentions.

His daughter, Flora, was at this time seventeen. Her figure was slight, but symmetrical; she had a clear, brilliant complexion, light hair, which fell in ringlets, and mild blue eyes. Of course, she had many admirers, among them McLeod, a partner in the Northwest Company, and William Gordon, the hero of our story.

William Gordon was the son, by an Indian woman, of a half brother of the Marquis of Huntly. He had been educated at the Catholic Seminary in Quebec. He was tall, well formed, with dark, piercing eyes, and coarse, straight hair, high cheek bones, and an olive complexion, that bespoke his Indian descent.

Yet he was considered eminently handsome. Governor Semple had introduced him to Cameron, without thinking it necessary to inform him of his connection with the Indians. His gentlemanly manners, and deference to the opinions of Cameron, made him a favorite with the old man; while his elegant person, polite address, and constant attention excited a stronger sentiment in the bosom of his daughter. Flora had observed that his temperament was melancholy, that he was subject to sudden fits of passion, and the least appearance of neglect was keenly felt. This did not, however, prevent her being as much pleased with him as ever. Her father looked upon the growing intimacy with pleasure. He liked William Gordon, and judged from the style of his living he would make a suitable partner for Flora, in a worldly point of view, and allowed him to become a constant visitor to their lodgings.

An occurrence soon took place which brought matters to a crisis. A sleighing party was to go to the mouth of the Utawas, on the ice, and our friends were of the party. They started in high spirits: Duncan Cameron, with Flora, taking the lead, and Gordon following.

About two miles from the city, there was an airhole in the ice. Cameron was driving his horse about thirty yards above it, at a smart trot, when the ice broke, and the sleigh, with the old man and Flora, was swept under it by the current. The gentlemen all stopped their horses, and the ladies screamed. All stood aghast but Gordon. Throwing off his cloak and boots, he plunged into the icy water, the whole passed in a moment. The party watched the airhole below with breathless anxiety. They had begun to fear that all were drowned, when Gordon appeared, holding Cameron by the collar with one hand, and Flora by the hair with the other, both too exhausted to help themselves in the least. As he attempted to gain a foothold on the ice, it broke under him, and their death seemed inevitable. No one dared approach near enough to help them. Fortunately, two Canadians were crossing the river with a load of planks, and hastened to his aid. Laying the planks on the ice, one of them reached Gordon, now almost ready to sink; yet he insisted that Flora should be the first saved. With little difficulty the Canadian drew her out upon the ice to a safe distance,

and then returned and extricated the old man in the same manner; and last of all, Gordon was taken from the water, chilled and exhausted. They were all three wrapped in buffalo robes, and conveyed with all speed to the city, where medical aid was procured. The old man and Flora continued insensible until after they reached their lodgings, and for a time were ignorant to whom they owed their deliverance; but tongues were not wanting to inform them, and praise the gallantry of Gordon. In a week they had all recovered from the effects of their submersion.

In a few days Gordon made a formal proposal for the hand of Flora. Her father, before giving a decided answer, made more particular inquiry of Governor Semple, the guardian of William, as to his character and connections; and when informed that he was a half-breed, the family pride of Cameron was roused, and he determined to refuse him. The governor endeavored to persuade the old man to think more favorably of it, and consent to their union. The old man was deaf to all reasoning on the subject. "I am a gentleman born," said he. "The blood of

Lochiel and Sir Evan Dhu runs in my veins, and it shall never be contaminated, with my consent. The boy is a good boy, and the Gordons are an ancient and noble race, but his mother is an insuperable objection. So, sir, it is no use to argue. I cannot consent to it."

At the interview in which this decision was communicated to Gordon, his indignation and disappointment broke through all restraint; a quarrel ensued, and the Scot forbade his daughter to hold any further intercourse with her lover. She could not obey. Through the instrumentality of a friend of Gordon's she had an interview with him, and pledged her word never to marry another; but he could not persuade her to elope with him.

By the advice of Governor Semple, Gordon resolved to go to Assiniboin. His guardian thought that in that wild country, where the want of all luxuries of life must be severely felt by Cameron, he would have a better prospect of overcoming his objections, than in Montreal. He accordingly set out the next week for Pembina, and travelled as far as Fort William, on the north shore of Lake

Superior. He was obliged to wear snowshoes the whole distance, and by the time he had arrived there, he was so lame he could hardly walk, as were all the rest of the party. He remained here until he had somewhat recovered, and then resumed his march, attended by two Canadians.

One of them, La Verdure, he found was of a brutal, discontented disposition. They carried with them provisions enough for four days, relying on their rifles, and the chance of meeting with friendly Indians, for their further support. But the snow was too deep, and they were too much impeded by the weight of their snowshoes, to think of following the few deer they saw. For four days all went well enough; but on the fifth they fasted, and La Verdure began to grumble, at being obliged to follow their employer, without food. The sixth day passed in the same manner; they saw no game, not even a single prairie hen. Noon came on the seventh day, and they had neither seen an Indian nor had an opportunity to shoot anything. In the afternoon Gordon overheard La Verdure address his comrade in French, supposing he could not understand

the language; but in this they were mistaken, as he understood it better than themselves.

"Jussomme," said he, "I am dying of hunger, and shall not be able to walk another day without I find something to eat."

"Why," said his companion, "this is not the first time you have fasted, I hope. I am hungry myself, but I could travel two days longer without eating."

"I will tell you better. There is no need of either of us fasting longer than to-night. Look at that man."

"Well, and what then? He has nothing to give us, and we cannot eat him."

"Why not? Sapristie! It is better that one should die than three. He would last until we could get a supply. Let us kill him as he sleeps."

"God forbid! God forbid! That were a mortal sin. We could never get absolution. I would rather die a thousand times. Villain! I will inform the young man of your intentions unless you promise to give them up."

"Will you so? Then take care of yourself. If you offer to tell him what I have said, I will shoot you on the spot. I do not fear

but I shall be able to deal with him alone. I tell you though, that I neither can nor will live any longer without food, and, if you interfere, your blood be upon your own head."

"It is a pity. It is a pity. He is a fine lad, and he has eaten less than either of us. Do as you please, however; it is no business of mine. I wash my hands of it."

The poor fellow sighed bitterly. He would have given a year's pay for an opportunity to speak to our hero. But La Verdure stuck so close to him it was impossible. Had he known that Gordon had understood the conversation it would have saved him much anxiety. Gordon was reluctant to shed blood, and he looked anxiously for some game, that the necessity of taking La Verdure's life might be avoided; for he was resolved that he would not allow himself to be killed for food for such a ruffian. At sunset they encamped without having met with any game. "How far is it to Fort Douglass, La Verdure?" said Gordon.

"So far that I think you will never reach it," replied he.

"I am very hungry, but I think I can hold out some time longer yet."

"I am hungry, too; but I shall not be to-morrow; at least, if you have flesh enough to feed me," he added, in his own language.

"Ha! say you so? Die, then, miscreant!" said Gordon, firing at him. The ball passed through the villain's head, and he fell back without a groan. This was the first time Gordon had shed human blood, and he had been too short a time in the Indian country to look upon it lightly.

The next morning, although very weak, Gordon and his remaining companion managed to walk about two miles, when they came upon a camp of friendly Indians. They were hospitably received, and remained with them several days, and after leaving them reached the fort without further difficulty. Gordon was received by the deputy governor with much courtesy, and entertained in the best manner the accommodations of the fort allowed. He found some of his Hohay kindred encamped near the fort, and made them some valuable presents at the same time accepting an invitation to visit their village.

On the third morning after his arrival one of his Hohay cousins came to him, leading a

splendid horse, saddled and bridled, after the Indian fashion.

"Come, my brother," said he. "I give you my best horse. Mount him, and come with us. One of our young men has just arrived, and tells us the buffalo are as thick as the stars in the skies. Our people are going to pound them as soon as we return. Come with us, and see how your brethren live."

Gordon had neither forgotten his mother tongue nor the manner of taking the buffalo, and was desirous of revisiting the scenes of his early childhood. He took leave of McDonald, and left with the Hohays. After two days' riding they reached the village, where Gordon was well received by the tribe, and feasted almost to suffocation. He passed the time with them hunting the buffalo, and joined in their sports, and soon became a general favorite.

While with them some of the tribe brought in an Indian woman they had captured on the prairies, who proved to be the wife of Wawnahton, their most deadly foe. When it became known in the tribe, they gathered around her, brandishing their knives, and crying for vengeance. Gordon, hearing the uproar, went

out to learn the cause, and, when told that the woman was to be tortured, he determined to save her. Rushing into the crowd, he placed himself before her, and demanded her of the chiefs for himself. There was such a clamor he could not make himself heard for some time, but finally succeeded in restoring quiet, and making known his wishes. Some of them were disposed to listen, but one large, ill-favored fellow rushed up to her crying, "He killed my brother, and she shall die for it." Gordon caught up an axe, and placing himself in a threatening attitude declared that if they killed her, they should kill him first; and offered, if they would give her to him, to pay for her when he returned to the fort. They at last consented, and she was given up to him. He returned to one of his cousins, and requested him to saddle his horse, and, as soon as he was brought, he mounted, and placing the woman before him, rode out on the prairie, fearing a change in the popular opinion. After riding about two miles he dismounted, and, giving her the horse, told her to make the best of her way to her own tribe, but not to fear pursuit, as she was mounted on the best horse in the

camp. When he returned he was met with threatening looks; but he remained silent, and the storm soon blew over. This humane action afterwards proved of benefit to him; as will appear before the close of the story. After spending a month with his red kindred, he returned to Fort Douglass, and as soon as the ice broke up, ascended the river to Pembina.

In the meantime Flora had remained at Montreal with her father. She had lost her gaiety, but not her hopes. Caveny, the friend of Gordon, had kept her informed of his movements, and being a warm friend he lost no opportunity to sound his friend's praises to her ear. It was at this time that McLeod made proposals to her father for the hand of Flora, and was warmly approved by him and referred to his daughter. Flora thanked him for his good opinion, but declined his offer, and, when pressed for her reasons, frankly told him her heart was already given to another.

The summer had far advanced before Governor Semple and Mr. Cameron had completed their arrangements for leaving Montreal, and joining the colony at Pembina. They finally started, but were detained on the way by the

sickness of Cameron, and arrived at Fort Douglass late in the fall. Governor Semple was detained there by business, and Mr. Cameron proceeded to Pembina alone. Unwilling to expose his daughter to unnecessary danger, he left her with the governor. When he arrived at Pembina, Gordon, under the pretense of hunting, saddled his horse and rode to Fort Douglass. He was cordially received by Flora and his guardian. Flora, indeed, gently reproved him for his visit, but upon telling her of the danger of the passage up the river, and that he could be of use to the governor, she made no further objection.

The governor having completed his arrangements prepared to leave. The crops had been destroyed by grasshoppers, and the people, both at Fort Douglass and at Pembina, were suffering for the want of food. A small portion of the stores at the fort were placed on board the boat, and they moved up the river. On the third day, their provisions being likely to come short, they were all placed on short allowance, and some of the women began to suffer. Gordon gave his share to Flora but, instead of eating it, she gave it to

a woman who was sick and scarce able to take care of her child. Gordon remonstrated with her for neglecting herself, but she replied, "Believe me, William, it would do me more harm to witness her sufferings than any hardship or privation I am likely to suffer."

"This is but the beginning of their misery. I am afraid all will suffer bitterly when winter sets in. If your father had shown common sense, you would have been exempt from it."

"Alas! I know his prejudices too well. Though you are a Gordon by the father's side, he cannot overcome his dislike to your Indian blood. For your own sake, then, seek a fairer and richer bride than poor Flora Cameron."

"Would you drive me mad, Flora? Forsake you! May God forsake me if I do! When you accepted the offer of my hand, you were ignorant of my family, but I know that the discovery has not lowered me in your opinion. I never sought to deceive you. I thought my descent was as plainly stamped on my features as the mark on the brow of the first homicide. It seems I was mistaken. If your heart is still unchanged, why should the folly of an old dotard sunder us? True, he gave you

life; but did I not save it, and his too? I have, therefore, as strong a claim on you as he. And having your plighted faith, do you think I will relinquish it? No, never, until I hear the command from your own lips! Seek a fairer bride, indeed! And where can she be found?"

"William, if you value my good opinion, do not speak again of my father as you have done. He is a good father to me, and it may be this family pride will yield to affection. Do not fear for me. If you wish it, I will again swear to you never to marry another."

"Forgive me, Flora, that, under a deep sense of wrong, I have spoken harshly of him. I will endeavor not to offend you again. But we need food for the famishing women and children; and, thank God, there is the track of a buffalo that has been to the river to drink within the hour. I will go ashore and try to bring a load of his flesh to the boat."

Flora tried to stop him, but he had already spoken to the steersman to set him ashore and did not hear her. As the boat touched the bank, he leaped ashore, and, waving his hand to Flora, ascended a small hillock, and looked

around for the buffalo. His practised eye soon discovered a solitary buffalo grazing at a distance. He shouldered his gun and was about to shoot, when a low whistle attracted his attention. He well understood it to be an Indian signal, meaning, "You are in danger; keep out of sight." The warning came from a small ravine at the foot of the hillock. He descended into the hollow and returned an answering signal. A tall, mounted Indian emerged from the ravine, and he recognized Wawnahton, the Dacotah chief whose wife he had rescued from the Hohays. Gordon had seen him since the rescue of his wife, at the fort at Pembina, which he had attacked with his band, at the instigation of McLeod, who had, since his rejection by Flora, preceded her into the Indian country, and, having learned our hero was his rival, had planned the attack and offered Wawnahton large inducements to undertake it. He had accompanied the savages, disguised as an Indian, in hopes to direct the attack in such a manner as to destroy Gordon. But the colony were apprised of their danger, and when they appeared before the fort they fired upon them,

and killed three of the savages, and the rest of the band retreated, with the exception of Wawnahton and his uncle, who in desperation crossed the river, and entered the fort alone, where they were met by Gordon, and an amicable settlement was made.

Upon learning that Gordon was the one who had shown such kindness to his wife, he had proposed they should be kodahs (brothers), and his object now was to warn him of danger. "Listen!" said he, "there is a hunter who thirsts for your blood. It is the Englishman—the old woman who persuaded me to come to Pembina. Do you see yonder?" pointing to a strip of wood, "he is there, and nineteen half-breeds with him. There were twenty this morning." Drawing his robe aside, he showed a scalp. "Keep a good watch to-night for they have been watching your boat all day."

"I cannot return empty to the boat," said Gordon. "Our women are dying of hunger; I must kill something, cost what it may."

"That is the way with you men who wear hats. But I have provided for that. Come, jump behind me."

Gordon sprang on the horse behind him, and half an hour's ride brought them to a clump of wood at a bend in the river, where the Indian showed him a fat cow hung in the branches, and told him it was for him. Gordon attempted to thank him, but he cut him short. "When your big canoe arrives," said he, "make a fire and eat. Then, as soon as it is dark, leave the camp and hide yourselves. Do not suffer yourselves to be surprised. I will be nigh you, and ten good bows shall not be wanting, in time of need."

After receiving some ammunition for a pistol he carried, he rode away. When the boats came up, Gordon communicated his intelligence to the governor, and recommended following the advice of Wawnahton, which was done, and they arrived at Pembina in safety. Mr. Cameron was very much incensed when he learned that Gordon had been to Fort Douglass, and had accompanied Flora up in the boat. But when told of the service he had rendered them, he became somewhat mollified.

Governor Semple had expected to find misery at Pembina, but the reality was far beyond his expectations. The houses of the col-

onists were of the rudest kind, and the sunken faces and hollow eyes of the occupants told a tale of famine and distress. The people angling, and drawing nets, and the heaps of the offal of fishes before the doors, showed how they had subsisted for a long time. The buffaloes had nearly all left the prairie; and even when they were plenty, they had been unable to hunt them with success, not having been accustomed to it. The river soon froze over, and the settlers suffered severely from famine. Gordon took care to supply Mr. Cameron with the best that could be obtained, unknown to him. But Flora found out from whence it came, and would manifest her gratitude by her looks whenever they met, which was seldom.

Governor Semple found that something must be done for the help of the inhabitants, or they would all perish. He therefore hired fifty half-breeds to hunt for them. A herd of buffaloes was known to be at the river Aux Parcs, and thither the hunters were directed to go and encamp, and afterwards follow the animals in their migrations, like the Indians. Gordon took the command of the party.

The governor advised the colonists to accompany the hunters to the plains. In order that they might be able to do so, he furnished them with lodges, bought of the Indians, and with horses and carts to transport their families and baggage. The procession was a curious one. There were upwards of a hundred rudely constructed carts, laden with tents, bedding, etc., with the women and children seated on the top. The females adopted the costume of the half-breed women, as better adapted to the country than their own. Cameron accompanied the party; and Flora, notwithstanding the remonstrances of her father, resolved to accompany him.

Gordon rode with the hunters, at the head of the procession. In two days, they reached the banks of the river, and encamped near a large herd of buffalo. The first hunt took place the following day. They killed one hundred buffaloes, and plenty reigned in the camp. They continued hunting, dressing the carcasses each day; and as fast as the meat was cured, it was transported to Pembina, until they had laid in a stock sufficient to last through the winter, when they made prep-

arations to break up the camp and return. But a new herd of buffalo making their appearance, they could not resist the temptation for one more hunt.

In the morning of the day on which the last hunt was to have taken place Mr. Cameron walked up the river on the ice, to where the horses were grazing on the rushes. As he turned a short bend, he perceived a party of Indians among the horses, and turned to retrace his steps. But he had been seen, and his retreat was cut off by two Indians. He shouted, to give the alarm to the camp. The Indians did not appear to be disposed to harm him, but seized him by the arms, and hurried him off at his utmost speed.

His cry had been heard, and the men came running out to save their horses. Gordon was the foremost. He perceived the situation of Cameron, and exerted himself to overtake his captors. One large Indian was between him and them; the rest were engaged with the horses. Raising his rifle, he fired and killed the Indian, and then continued the pursuit, and reached a ravine twenty-five feet broad, just as they had reached the opposite side. One of the

savages, seeing the rescue inevitable, loosened his hold on the old man, and drew an arrow to kill him. But Gordon, exerting himself to the utmost, cleared the chasm at one bound, and felled the Indian to the earth with the butt of his rifle. The other uttered a loud whoop, and, stepping back a few paces, let fly an arrow at Gordon. It glanced his powder-horn, and buried itself to the feather in the breast of Cameron. Before he had time to draw another, Gordon was upon him. Leaping up, he struck the Indian in the chest with his heels and beat him to the earth, at the same time receiving a deep wound in the leg from his knife. They grappled; but the struggles of the savage were unavailing. Few men could have contended with Gordon at any time, but now he fought with tenfold energy. Seizing the wrist of his prostrate foe, he buried his knife in his breast. The whole passed in a moment, and the foremost of the half-breeds came up just as the Indian drew his last breath.

Gordon called to one of them, named Le Gross, to take the old man to the camp, and turned to urge on the men in pursuit of the savages, and save the horses. Gordon's leg

soon began to stiffen, rendering him unable to walk, and he was carried by the men to the camp. It presented a desolate appearance. Five women lay on the ground, tomahawked and scalped. Before the door of Cameron's tent lay Le Gross with five arrows sticking in his body. He, too, had lost his scalp, but the body of an Indian, lying a few paces from him, showed that he had not fallen without resistance.

Cameron was lying in his tent helpless. The arrow had not been withdrawn, but he still breathed. Flora was nowhere to be found. Gordon was for a moment paralyzed; but soon recovering, he sent Des Champs to examine the premises. The women, who had fled and concealed themselves, now appeared. They told him that just as Le Gross had laid the old man on the bed, and returned to the door of the tent, a party of Indians entered the camp from the rear, and attacked him; and when they had despatched him, entered the tent and seized Flora, carrying her off insensible. Des Champs now returned and reported that the Indians had had horses concealed in the woods, and that they had taken a northern course.

He could do nothing himself towards rescuing her, neither could he prevail on any of the half-breeds to follow her captors. The arrow was extracted from the breast of Cameron, and the wound dressed. Meantime the tents had been struck; and, placing the old man in one cart and Gordon in another, they started for Pembina, which they reached without further accident.

For several weeks Gordon was confined to his room with his wounds. At the end of that time, a half-breed arrived from Lacontravers, and from him he learned that Wawnahton was encamped with his band on the Wild Rice River, and he determined to seek him, in hopes to learn something from Flora. He left Pembina accompanied by Des Champs and reached his camp in nine days. From Wawnahton he learned that Nopah Keon, with his band, was encamped about six days' ride from where he then was, and that he had a white woman in his lodge. Wawnahton offered to go with him, and compel him to surrender her; and after being detained several days by a severe storm, they started, and finding him, succeeded by threats and a present

of ten horses, in obtaining the release of Flora. It appeared that McLeod had hired Nopah Keon to capture Flora and deliver her to him. But when he appeared to claim her, the Indian refused to give her up, intending to make her his wife as soon as she recovered.

Flora was rejoiced at seeing Gordon, and anxious to start immediately for Pembina. Wawnahton made a dog sledge for her, and furnished buffalo robes, in which she was wrapped, and, with thirty of his band, escorted them to the fort. They found her father very low in health and spirits; and, after hearing her story, he desired them to send for Lord Selkirk, at that time at the fort, and a magistrate, and be married at once, as he was convinced he could live but a short time. Flora wished to postpone it for a time; but he would hear of no delay, and the ceremony was performed. At the conclusion, they turned toward him, but he had breathed his last. A week after the burial of the old man, Gordon and his wife left Pembina for Montreal, where they remained till spring, and then sailed for Scotland to join his father, who had come into possession of the contested estate.

HAM CASS AND HIS VOW

John Cass was a Virginian by birth, who settled somewhere about the year 1790, on the banks of the Ohio, near Duck Creek, a few miles from Fort Harmer, and obtained his living by hunting and trapping. He brought with him his wife, two sons, and a niece, named Betsy Cass. The fever carried off his wife and eldest boy within a year, leaving him with only Hamilton, a boy of sixteen, and Betsy, who was four years younger. Ham was left by the fever in a very weak and feeble condition, and was for several months unable to leave the cabin. To help pass away the time, the doctor lent him books, and taught him to read, which in the end proved more injurious than beneficial to the young man; as, after his health was restored, he could not, or would not leave his books, except for a short time to help Betsy about the cabin, or do a few "chores" in the garden; and the old man, who began to grow infirm, was obliged to hunt alone.

One morning, as he was preparing to start for Fletcher's Island, where he had some traps,

the old man seemed very low-spirited, and broke out, "If it had pleased God to spare James, I should not need to go alone to risk my old scalp among the redskins."

At these words Ham jumped up and said, "Let me go with you, father."

"You, boy?" said the old man, in surprise. "No, no! That will never do; you don't take kindly to the woods, and it's no use forcing nature. No, no; stay at home, boy, and help Betsy."

For the first time in his life, Ham seemed to feel ashamed of himself, and begged so earnestly to be allowed to go, that his father consented, still hoping he might become interested in the sport. They entered the canoe and descended the creek into the river, and in the first trap, which was on the mainland, they found a large otter, and two coons, and commenced taking the skins. Ham was unused to the work, and before he had half finished his coon, had cut the pelt in so many places it was hardly worth finishing, and finally ended by cutting his hand severely. This, of course, put an end to his work for that day, and when he had washed and bound up the wound, he

sat down on the bank, and pulling a book from his pocket was soon lost in its contents. The old man, having finished his work, called three times before he could arouse him. He saw he did not like to be disturbed, and, wishing to please him, proposed he should stay where he was while he went over to the island. Ham caught at the words, and before the old man had fairly shoved off was again buried in his book. How long he remained thus he could not tell; but he was roused by the sharp crack of a rifle, a loud whoop, and a scream of mingled pain and fear. He looked up; the island, which at the nearest end was only about a hundred yards from where he sat, was covered with tall, rank grass, very few trees, and no brushwood so he could see right across it. Through the grass he saw his father running for life, pursued by a tall Indian. The old man gained the shore opposite where his son stood, the Indian close behind him. "Fire! fire, boy!" shouted the old man. Ham seized his father's rifle, which the old man had left behind, and fired. The ball skipped along the water twenty yards from its mark. The Indian raised a shout of triumph; the old man gave a

shriek of despair; still he had one chance for his life; he might reach the canoe, and push off before the savage could overtake him; he gained it, but the Indian was close at hand; one push, the light bark floated upon the stream; he sprang in, grasped his paddle, but before it touched the water the tomahawk came whizzing through the air, and buried itself in the old man's skull. With an exulting shout the savage sprang upon his fallen enemy, and plunged his knife into his heart, and while Ham was trying in vain to fire the rifle, which he had hastily loaded, he saw the scalp torn from his father's head by the Indian, who again raised his loud warwhoop. Then, as if in mockery of the attempts of Ham, he tossed the scalp into the air, catching it as it fell, repeating the feat again and again, shouting and whooping all the while, in the full enjoyment of gratified revenge.

Ham stood gazing on the murderer of his father, as if the frightful spectacle had turned him into stone; and it was not until he heard the ramrod of the Indian ring in the barrel of his rifle, that he recollected his own scalp could only be saved by putting the high bank

between the Indian and himself. He ran, scarcely knowing whither; chance directed him towards Harmer, four miles below; but before he had accomplished half the distance he met a scouting party, consisting of Balt Williams and two others. Ham related his story, though in a very incoherent manner; but, by questioning him, they finally got at the whole story, and, entering a canoe which lay concealed in the creek, they returned with him.

On their way one of the party, thinking it strange "Old Swift Sure" should miss fire drew the charge, and turning to his comrades, said, "Look! the old man's life has been fooled away by a poor sip of a boy who don't know enough to load a rifle. He has put in the ball and wadding first, and the powder on the top." Ham started and looked eagerly at the charge, but said not a word, though his face assumed a calm, determined look, and he sat in the stern of the canoe immovable as a rock. It took but a short time to reach the fatal spot. The Indian had gone off with the canoe, but they found the body of the old man on the bank, quite cold and dead. The ball had entered his side, making a bad flesh wound, from which

he would have recovered, but the tomahawk had made sure work.

They thought the sight of the body would make Ham crazy, but he seemed not to mind it, remaining cold and indifferent, and only spoke once, when they proposed taking the body to the cabin. "No, no! To the settlement," said Ham. After holding a short consultation it was arranged that two of them should take the body in the canoe to the settlement, and send a team for Betsy, while Balt Williams and Ham should go to the cabin, and break the news to her.

When they arrived at the cabin Williams told the story to Betsy. She seemed frantic with grief, and bitterly reproached Ham for his cowardice. He heard her through without saying a word, and then turned and left the cabin, and he did not again make his appearance until just as the body of his father was being lowered into the grave, although search had been made for him. He stood beside the grave until the service was ended, and then, beckoning to Balt Williams to follow him, he walked away towards the woods, without having uttered a word or shed a tear. When he

reached his father's cabin he motioned to Balt to sit down, and, taking a seat beside him, "Balt Williams," said he, "you are the only one who has not cursed me for my folly and wickedness in the murder of my father. I will prove to you that, bad as I have been, I am not so bad as *she* called me. I am no coward. But first show me how to load this rifle." Williams took it and did as he was desired; Ham watched him closely, and when he had done asked him to fire at a mark. Williams showed him the sights along the barrel, and explained the use of them, and how to hold the rifle; and then, pointing to a blaze on a tree which stood some distance in front of the cabin, told him he would hit that. He fired, and struck the mark in the centre. "Now," said Ham, "let me try," and taking the rifle he loaded it as well and carefully as the oldest hunter in the settlement could have done, and, raising it to his shoulder, took deliberate aim, holding the gun as motionless as if it had rested on a rock, and fired. The ball hit the centre of the mark. "That will do," said he, "and now, Williams, good-by." Balt asked him where he was going, telling him he ought to

go to the settlement and see his cousin before going away.

"See her!" he exclaimed. "See her! Never! She called me a coward, and said I had no feeling."

He turned into the hut. "See here, Williams," said he, "I have provided for a hunt"; and showed him a powder horn and bullet pouch, well filled, a small bag of parched corn, and a venison ham. "But where are you going, and what are you going to hunt?" asked Williams. He looked around, with a savage expression, and answered:

"Balt Williams, I am going to the woods to hunt revenge. You thought me a boy—an unfeeling idiot—who could stand by and see his father murdered without striking one blow in his defence. Now hear me"—and with his left hand resting on the muzzle of his rifle, and his right lifted towards heaven, he continued: "May the curse due his murderer rest on my soul forever,—may disease and premature decay waste my body, and remorse and everlasting despair prey on my spirits, my name be abhorred while I live, and my memory accursed when I die,—if I have not my revenge.

No human threshold will I cross, with no living being will I hold intercourse, or companionship, till my knife drinks his blood. I know him well; I saw his face and figure when he did the murder, and this morning I marked his tracks upon the sand. I will hunt him to his death. He took my father's scalp—let him look to his own!" And he ground his teeth with rage.

Williams tried to persuade him to remain at home, urging the folly of one so unused to the ways of the Indians, and to tracking the forest, undertaking to track an old warrior, especially at that time, when the woods were filled with hostile Indians. But it was of no avail. He caught up his bags, and, shouldering his rifle, started for the woods. Balt returned to the settlement, and related the story. All agreed that he must be insane, and that, unless he was brought back, he must inevitably perish by the hands of the Indians. In the morning, Balt, with several others, started in pursuit of him, and striking his trail followed it several days, but finally lost it where it came to a river.

They at first thought he was pursued by the

terrible, big Broadfoot, who, they found by the tracks in the sand where the old man was killed, was the murderer; but on coming to where they both crossed the brook, they found it was the reverse, and that Ham had found the trail of the Indian and followed it with the certainty of an old hunter, and was rapidly gaining on his enemy, when they lost his trail. Some of the party thought he must have either been killed by the Indians, and his body thrown into the river, or else drowned himself in despair. Balt Williams did not agree with either, but thought they must have both taken the river. He felt sure the Indian had, as they discovered the marks where a canoe had rubbed against a rock in the river. The party returned to the settlement, considering it useless to pursue them farther. Another party, of whom Williams was one, started a few days after, but were equally unsuccessful, and returned, though they regained the trail and followed it some distance beyond where the first party lost it.

Nearly a month after the burial of the old man, Balt Williams was passing by his grave, when he discovered what he first supposed was

an Indian stretched upon the grave. He brought his rifle to his shoulder, when the figure turned so as to show his face, and he at once recognized the features of Ham Cass. He could hardly believe his own eyes; but it must be. The face was Ham's, although wasted almost to a skeleton.

"Good heavens, Ham, are you here?" exclaimed Williams.

"Yes," he replied, rising, "I am here; here at my father's grave, I have come to weep. Yes; now I can weep, and no one will call me boy, or woman, or coward. Now I can mourn my father, for his death is avenged. "See!" he exclaimed, spurning something with his foot; "see, Balt Williams, your lesson in rifle shooting has not been lost on me; I have hit my mark" and with his foot he rolled over the head of an Indian, turning the face upward.

"What have you there?" exclaimed Williams, in astonishment. "It is impossible! and yet by heavens it is—the head of Broadfoot!"

"'Tis no other," replied Ham. "I have hunted him day and night for a month; he took me to the water, I followed him; he plunged

into the woods; still I was on his track; he was surrounded by crowds of friends; I knew his track among a thousand; at last he parted from his friends, and walked the woods alone. Then I met him, and there is his head," and he gave it a contemptuous kick. "They call me coward—did he find me one? They said I dared not face my father's enemy—would he say so? They thought I had no feeling, no pity, no sense, no affection—ha! I have revenge, and that is better than all. There lies the head of the best warrior among the Miami tribes. He slew my father—my father's rifle bored his skull, my father's knife split his heart."

He stood gazing at the grave a few minutes in silence, and then turning to Williams with a softened expression, said, "Come, let us go; I can meet Betsy now without fear of being called a coward, for my father has been revenged, and by my hands." He was joyfully received by Betsy, who had long mourned him as dead, bitterly reproaching herself for her harshness. Ham lived many years, and Broadfoot was not the only Indian who felt his revenge.

CAPTURE AND ESCAPE OF ALEXANDER McCONNELL

Alexander McConnell was one of the first settlers of Lexington, Kentucky, and celebrated for the coolness and bravery which he exhibited in numerous encounters with the Indians. One morning, in the spring of 1780, he went into the woods to hunt for deer, and had proceeded but a short distance when he shot a large buck. After securing it from the wolves, he returned to the settlement for his horse, on which to take home the carcass.

During his absence a party of five Indians discovered the deer, and rightly judged that the owner would soon return for it. The place was in a ravine, the sides of which were covered with a dense growth of bushes, admirably adapted for an ambuscade. The Indians divided themselves into two parties, and awaited his approach. McConnell soon appeared, riding leisurely along, unsuspicious of danger, until he was fired upon by the whole party, and his horse shot under him. He became entangled in the fall of the horse,

and, before he could extricate himself, the Indians rushed upon him, and made him prisoner.

His captors appeared to be a good-natured, merry set of fellows, and, after binding his wrists, commenced their retreat, which they continued until night, when they encamped, binding their prisoner in a sitting posture to a tree. In the morning McConnell persuaded them by signs to unbind his wrists; and, what was remarkable, they allowed him to resume his gun and ammunition. He accompanied them with apparent cheerfulness, and endeavored to win their confidence still further by showing his dexterity in handling his rifle, and shooting a deer for their use. He soon so far won upon them that they showed considerable favor, treating him as a prisoner only when they encamped for the night. In this manner they proceeded several days, until they reached the banks of the Ohio, where they encamped at night, as usual.

McConnell now determined if possible to make his escape before crossing the river, as it would be much more difficult after they should cross, for, even should he succeed in

eluding his present captors, he would be much more likely to meet other parties of Indians, and be recaptured by them, than if he were on the eastern side of the river.

Accordingly, when they commenced securing him, as usual, he laughed at them for binding him so securely, and by signs, and such words as he knew of their language, told them they were cowards; and, though five to one, dared not go to sleep without tying him; and, by his taunting manner, made them almost ashamed to bind him, but could not prevail upon them to entirely abandon their habitual cautiousness. But, instead of tying him to a tree, as they had previously done, they bound his wrists together with a thong, and then made the other end fast to the bodies of two of their number, and then laid down on each side of him, in such a position that but a slight movement would awake them.

McConnell laid quietly, and soon feigned sleep, endeavoring to form some plan of escape. He laid thus till near midnight, when his eye fell on the blade of a knife almost at his feet; this gave him hope, and he commenced trying

to reach the knife with his feet; in which he succeeded, and finally got it into his hands.

Having now the means of releasing his hands, he was not long in using them; but when they were free he felt he had still a difficult part to perform, for, should he succeed in escaping from them now, they would soon discover his escape and start in pursuit, and there being so many of them he could not hope to outstrip them all. He therefore made up his mind that they must all be disposed of, and that he had but little time to spare. Cautiously rising he walked to the guns, which were all stacked near the fire. He took four and secreted them in the bushes, where it would be difficult for the Indians to find them, and then taking the other two, one in each hand, he rested the muzzles on a log which lay about six feet from where the Indians were, took deliberate aim at the head of one and the heart of another, and fired both guns at the same time, killing them both instantly.

At the report of the rifles the three remaining Indians sprang to their feet, stared wildly around them, at the same time making an involuntary movement towards the place where

the guns had been stacked, and finding them gone, gave a tremendous yell, and sprang towards the bushes. McConnell, who on discharging the guns had run to where he had secreted the others, was now ready for them, and, bringing his rifle to his shoulder, waited until he could bring it to bear on two of them at once and then fired. The first one fell dead; and the second one fell, and McConnell supposed was completely disabled.

The remaining Indian rushed forward, with a yell of defiance, and before McConnell could throw down his rifle and seize another one, he was upon him, and swinging his tomahawk above his head, he struck a tremendous blow; but McConnell, cool as ever, dodged it, and the Indian, unable to recover from the impetus of the blow, fell headlong, at the same time losing his hold on the tomahawk. But before McConnell could spring upon him he had recovered himself, and now grappled with him and bore him to the ground. McConnell, however, soon succeeded in turning him, but he himself was turned again, and so equally matched were they that for some minutes they continued the struggle, neither one being

able to gain much advantage over the other, until they had rolled to the spot where the Indian had lost his tomahawk, when he, being uppermost, attempted to regain it, but McConnell at the same instant struck him a powerful blow with his fist, and, with a tremendous effort, succeeded in turning him; and, getting astride his body, he seized him by the throat with the left hand, while with the right he drew his knife and stabbed him in the breast, killing him almost instantly.

He now thought he had succeeded in ridding himself of the whole party; but, upon rising, he felt something grasp his ankle, and looking around he saw the wounded Indian, who had crawled to the spot, and with his left hand was grasping the ankle, while with the right he held his knife. McConnell, with a sudden jerk, twitched away his foot, and, seizing the tomahawk of the dead Indian, with one blow sunk it into his skull.

Having now succeeded in freeing himself from a situation in which most men would have given up in despair, he started for home, having first secreted the guns of the Indians, and furnished himself with a sufficient quan-

tity of food and ammunition. He travelled through the day with great caution, having, early in the forenoon, crossed the fresh trail of three Indians; and at night, on arriving at a clump of trees, he encamped, but dared not build a fire for fear of attracting attention; after eating the meat he had left he sat down, with his back to a tree, intending to secure a few hours' sleep, and resume his march, in hopes of getting out of the vicinity of the Indians before they should discover his trail.

He had slept but a short time when he was awakened by a noise, and, listening intently, he heard the cracking of a small, dry twig, and, starting to his feet, discovered three Indians within a few feet of him. Having no time to retreat behind the tree, he raised his gun to his shoulder, and fired at the foremost Indian, instantly killing him. But before he could turn to escape from the others they had sprung upon him and pinioned him with their arms. He endeavored to throw them off, but they were too much for him, and, binding his arms behind his back, they tied him to a tree, and then, building a fire, cooked some of the meat he had brought with

him, after which they laid down with their feet to the fire, and went to sleep, leaving him to rest as best he might.

He was again a prisoner, but was not yet disheartened, and still had hopes of being able to escape, though he feared it would be more difficult than before, as his present captors seemed disposed to confine him more securely than the former had done. He therefore determined to watch his opportunity, and if possible outwit the Indians, and yet make good his escape; and, that he might be prepared for whatever might happen, he composed himself to sleep, and, although in an unfavorable position, succeeded in obtaining a few hours' sleep.

Early the next morning the Indians were awake, and after cooking their breakfast, a part of which they gave their prisoner, they unbound him from the tree, still leaving his arms bound as before, and started in the direction of the Ohio River, following the trail which McConnell had made the day before, and, travelling at a rapid rate arrived just at night at the place where his former captors had encamped. Upon seeing his vic-

tims they set up a tremendous howling, at the same time dancing around the prisoner, and shaking their tomahawks at his head, until he began to fear they would despatch him at once.

Whether they thought he had killed them alone, he could not tell, but they evidently thought he knew something about it, as his trail had led directly to the place. They, however, soon ceased their antics, and, tightening the cords on his arms, they again bound him to a tree, and digging a large hole, collected all the bodies, buried them in it, and, after tramping down the earth and removing all signs from the grave, they built a large fire over the place, scattering the ashes around so as to hide the spot as much as possible from their enemies. After they had finished their labors they again unbound their prisoner, and resumed their march, and, on reaching the river, a short distance above where they had buried the Indians, pulled out a canoe concealed under the bank, embarked, crossed the river, and, again secreting the canoe, encamped for the night, feeding him scantily, as their provisions began to run

THEY SET UP A TREMENDOUS HOWLING, AT THE SAME TIME DANCING AROUND THE PRISONER AND SHOWING THEIR TOMAHAWKS.

rather low, they having killed nothing during the day. In the morning one of them went off alone, and, after having been gone a short time, returned with the hind quarter of a deer which he had shot. After cooking what they could eat, and giving their prisoner as much as he wished, they unbound him, and commenced their march for an Indian town about thirty miles from the river, which they reached just before night, not having travelled as rapidly as the day before.

Upon coming in sight of the village they set up a dismal howling and were soon surrounded by the inhabitants, amounting in all to some four or five hundred. The two Indians then commenced talking and gesticulating very rapidly, and were evidently telling the story of finding the five dead Indians; although McConnell did not understand their language, he suspected, from angry looks directed towards him, that he formed a part of the subject of conversation. After the two Indians had concluded, they approached their captive and unbound him, compelling him to strip off all his clothing. He was now satisfied he would have to run the gauntlet, accord-

ing to their usual custom, and from the scowling looks directed towards him was convinced it would be no child's play, but that they would give him rather rough usage. As soon, therefore, as they had formed their lines, and given the word to start, he found he was not mistaken, for the blows were laid on thick and hard; but he exerted himself to the utmost, and succeeded in passing through the lines with no more serious injury than a severe bruising from the clubs of the warriors.

He was then allowed to resume his clothing, and was conducted to a hut standing in the center of the village, where he was left in charge of one Indian and an old squaw, who gave him some food, at the same time throwing down an old mat for him to sleep on, and then lying down herself. The Indian wrapped himself in his blanket and laid down before the door of the hut, so that it would be impossible to open it without awakening him.

McConnell now determined to make an effort to escape as soon as all should be quiet in the village, difficulty, instead of discouraging, only making him more resolute. Beside, he knew that if he remained in their

hands he would, most likely, have to suffer the most horrid torture on the following day, and he preferred a quick and sudden death, in the attempt to escape, which he was resolved upon, rather than to be taken alive.

He began to fear, however, that the Indians never would become still, as they kept up a horrid yelling and screeching until near midnight. But finally they became quiet, and nothing could be heard outside the hut but the occasional screeching of an owl. But the old squaw manifested no disposition to sleep, sometimes muttering to herself, and then getting up to stir the fire or throw on more fuel. At last, about one o'clock she began to show signs of weariness, and soon fell into a deep sleep. The Indian had long been still, and gave every indication of being asleep. McConnell remained quite a little while longer, until he felt sure they were really asleep, and then commenced operations. He had previously, in his keen glances around the room in search of some weapon, seen an old tomahawk in one corner of the hut. The hut being made of logs there was no hope of escape except through the door, and there was, consequently,

no other way than to despatch his guards as silently as possible.

His plans were soon laid. Possessing himself of the tomahawk, he crept cautiously towards the old woman, and, with sure and steady aim, buried it in her skull; and then, with a tremendous leap reached the side of the Indian, who, however, had been awakened by the blow, and had partially risen, but before he had time to make an outcry, or free himself from his blanket, the tomahawk again descended with all the force of McConnell's powerful arm, and, striking him fair on the head, he sank down without a groan.

There was nothing to prevent his leaving the hut, and hastily arming himself with the gun and equipments of the dead Indian, and securing what food and ammunition he could conveniently carry, he rolled the dead body from before the door, and, looking out, found everything still and quiet. Cautiously creeping along in the shadow of the hut, he succeeded in getting out of the village without giving an alarm.

Directing his course towards the river, and proceeding at a rapid pace, he reached the

spot where the canoe had been concealed soon after sunrise, and, crossing the river, stopped but a short time to eat, and then pursued his way, and on the third day reached Lexington. His story was not at first believed, but subsequent events proved the truth of it, and he was afterwards held in a sort of veneration by all the settlers.

CHARLES HESS

Among the adventurers who joined the trading companies of the Northwest were some possessed of qualities that, in other situations, would have commanded respect and admiration. Of this number was Charles Hess. With a strength of body and mind seldom equalled, and an energy and quickness of apprehension that, with the advantages of education, would have insured him success in any profession he might have chosen, circumstances over which he had no control rendered him poor all his life. Where he originated, he never knew, but had a faint recollection of having witnessed the burning of his paternal roof, and the slaughter of his family by the Indians. After having lived many years with different tribes, he found himself at last on the Red River, and entered the service of the Northwest Fur Company, where his talents and activity soon obtained him a clerkship. According to the custom of the traders, he married a Chippewa squaw, by whom he had several children.

In the winter of 1814, while stationed at the Lake of the Woods, an Indian called Opawgun Mokkeetay, or the Black Pipe, took offence at him for having refused to give him as much liquor as he desired. Shortly after, Hess had occasion to go on a journey, and employed the Black Pipe as a guide. They travelled together half a day without any suspicion on the part of Hess. As they came to a ravine, the Indian proposed to stop and smoke before crossing it, and Hess cheerfully complied. "Brother," said Black Pipe, "you have always been very kind to me. The other day you refused to let me make a fool of myself. You were right. I have a fast hold on your heart."

"I am glad," replied Hess, "that you are wise at last. But we have far to go; let us push on."

"Directly," rejoined the other, examining the lock and priming his gun. "Go on, brother; I will but tie my moccasin and then follow."

Hess took up his gun and crossed the ravine. Just as he reached the level ground on the other side, he heard the report of the Indian's gun, and felt his side grazed by a ball. He

turned, and saw that Black Pipe had taken to his heels as soon as he had fired. Bringing his rifle to his shoulder, he fired, and the Indian fell dead. Black Pipe, to make more sure of his victim, had loaded his rifle with two bullets. But he overshot his mark; for the balls diverged, one of them grazed his right side, and the other cut his belt in two on his left side.

Two or three evenings after his return, a cousin of Black Pipe, by the name of Squibee, entered his roon with his gun in his hand, and his face painted black. He seated himself before the fire without saying a word. Hess saw that he was bent on mischief, and thought it best to temporize. He offered him a pipe, which was refused. He then set before him a wooden platter of boiled venison; but he would not take it. He spoke several times to the savage, but no answer. Squibee sat sullen and immovable, his eyes turned in their sockets, though his head did not move, and he cast furtive and scowling glances around. The men belonging to the establishment, who were much attached to their principal, looked in; but when they saw the expression of the In-

dian's features, they shrank back and loaded their guns.

After a silence of half an hour, Hess determined to bring matters to an issue. "Nitchee" (friend), said he, "what makes your heart sorrowful, and what do you seek in my house?"

"My brother, Opawgun Mokkeetay, is dead," replied the savage. "My eyes are dry, and I want something to make the tears come in them."

Hess went into his store-house and drew a glass of spirits, which he gave to the Indian. The latter held it up between his eyes and the light, and then threw it into the fire. It blazed above the chimney.

"Why did you not drink it?" said Hess.

"It is not good; it is no better than water," replied the other.

"It burned as if it was good," said Hess, still desirous to conciliate him. "I thought it was strong enough. I will get you some more." And he went out to do so.

Squibee was evidently working himself up to the pitch of resolution requisite for some desperate action. He began to examine his gun, and to look uneasily about him. At one

moment he seemed to relent. He wiped the smut from one side of his face with the corner of his blanket; but one of the Canadians happening to look in, he turned away his head. The instant the man withdrew, he scraped some soot from the chimney-back, spat upon it, and renewed the color of his visage. He had scarcely finished when Hess reappeared. "Here," said the trader, "is liquor that is as strong as fire. Drink."

The Indian doggedly put the glass to his lips, took a mouthful, and spat it out again. He threw the remainder into the fire, saying, "Neither is that good—bring more."

Hess turned to obey, and as he stooped to pass through the door heard the report of Squibee's gun, and saw the splinters fly from the timbers over his head. Without manifesting any concern, he went out, and was asked by Menard, one of his people, "What is the matter? Are you hurt, mon bourgeois?"

"I believe not," he replied; "but I have had a narrow escape. I felt the scoundrel's bullet stir my cap." He took it off, and saw that he had, indeed, been near death; the ball had gone through it within an inch of his skull.

Without uttering another word, he entered his store, drew a third glass of liquor, and returned with it to the room where he had left the Indian. He offered him the glass, saying, "You have been at the fort at the forks of the Assiniboin River, and have seen the scales used to weigh the furs go up and down. Just so it is with your life. Shall I live? Shall I die? Dog!" he continued, his anger rising as he saw the Indian's countenance did not relax its ferocious expression, "your life is light in the balance. Look at that sun; it is the last time you shall ever look upon it. Drink that liquor; it is the last you shall ever taste."

Squibee, as ready to suffer as he had been to inflict suffering, took the glass, coolly emptied its contents, and drew his blanket over his head. Hess levelled a pistol and blew out his brains.

When the Hudson Bay and Northwest Companies united, Hess with many others was thrown out of employment. He remained at Pembina, and maintained his family by hunting, till 1822, when he was offered a situation by the Columbian Fur Company, then just formed, which he accepted, and, with two

horses and carts, started with his family and effects to go to Lac au Travers, and expected to support his family by the buffaloes he might shoot by the way. They had accomplished about half the distance without meeting any of the roving bands of Sioux that infested the prairies in the vicinity of the Red River, and hoped to complete the journey in like security. One day, at noon, they had halted at the river Aux Ontardes, to eat dinner and give their horses time to feed. While they were eating, a drove of buffaloes came in sight, and Hess mounted his horse to pursue them. From some cause which he could not then explain, the herd took fright, and he followed a long distance before he was able to bring one down.

For two days the family had been followed by an erratic band of Dacotahs, called by the English the People of the Pole. They were the Ishmaelites of the Northwest, none ever escaping from their hands without being plundered, unless too strong for them to meddle with; and few whom they plundered survived to tell the tale. They knew Hess by report, and several of them had seen him; and such was his character, as a warrior, that they had

HESS LEVELLED HIS PISTOL.

not dared to attack him. They had, therefore, until now, kept out of sight; but when they saw him ride after the buffaloes, they had sent a runner to frighten the animals, in order that he might go too far to see or hear what was to take place. In this they succeeded too well. The principal cause for their perseverance in the pursuit was the fact that the wife of Hess was a Chippewa, to whom they were deadly enemies, and the blood of that hated race ran in the veins of his children. And, had not that been the case, the thirst for blood, and the little property in the carts—the supply of ammunition and tobacco they expected to find, and the scanty clothing and ornaments of the victims—would have been to them sufficient inducements to butcher a much larger number of human beings. When Hess returned at sunset, faint and weary, from his successful hunt, a sad sight for a husband and parent met his view. The bodies of his wife and children were naked; the scalps had been torn from their heads, and their bodies were bristling with arrows. His carts were broken in pieces, and the horses led away.

"I have seen," said Hess, "many a sight of

blood and horror, but never before anything like that. For a moment my brain turned, and the world seemed annihilated. Had the Indians then come back, they might have taken me like a child. But other feelings soon arose in my breast. My blood boiled; I felt it flowing in my veins like molten lead. My voice became husky, and my palate parched. I was almost suffocated with rage, which was not at all allayed by the reflection that I could do nothing for vengeance. I was alone, a poor, weak, friendless old man. The murderers had at least four hours the start of me. Their trail I could see; but if I followed it, what could one, even if he were younger and stronger than I, have done? But this would not have weighed with me an instant, if my wearied horse could have carried me. Those only who have suffered such a loss, in such a manner, can have any idea of my feelings.

"When I came a little to myself, I found that my children were not all present. There lay my wife, her infant nailed to her bosom with an arrow. There was my brave boy, his face turned upward, still grasping the knife he had drawn to defend his mother and sisters,

his teeth set, looking defiance, though cold and dead. Five of my children were there in one bloody pile; but my eldest daughter was gone. This did not console me, for I knew some brutal savage had saved her that she might become his wife.

"I dug their grave with the knife I wore in my belt. I had no fear that the wolves would disturb them, for the carcasses of the buffaloes laid on the prairies. The work occupied me all night. I took one last embrace of her, who, although her hue was dark, had been my faithful partner through twenty years of joy and sorrow. With a weak and trembling hand I laid my family in the earth, and I swore over them, by God the Father Almighty, the Omnipotent Maker of heaven and earth, that if any of those who had thus bereaved me should ever fall within my power, I would not spare them; no, not the babe unborn."

But when this first storm of passion was over, his better feelings prompted him to attempt the recovery of his daughter, rather than obey the dictates of revenge. Four days' travel carried him to Lac au Travers. On his arrival, he was kindly welcomed by Messrs.

McKenzie, Laidlaw, and other partners of the Columbian Fur Company. Another trial awaited him. The next day he was taken ill, and was confined to his bed for several days. While he lay sick, he learned that the Indian, who had made his daughter a prisoner, had taken her to wife. The partners of the Columbian Fur Company offered him any amount of merchandise that might be needed for her ransom, and it was settled that he should go and demand her at the Indian camp, as soon as his health would permit. A messenger was sent to ask on what terms she might be redeemed, and the answer was soon obtained.

As force could avail him nothing, Hess determined to go alone, and unarmed, in search of his daughter. When he arrived at the camp, another dreadful spectacle awaited him. The scalps of his family were hung upon a pole, and the savages were dancing around them in triumph. He was greeted, not with hostility, for the hospitality of the Sioux nation forbade that, but with evident exultation and insolence. Some sung the wrong they had done him. He presented himself before the husband of his daughter, and, uncover-

ing his breast, said, "I am worthy of pity. This is my only child; restore her, or strike me as you struck her mother. I am alone on earth; lo! here is a ransom."

The features of the Indian showed some feeling. "I am the only child of *my* father," he replied. "The ransom is small, but you are old, and need some one to make your clothes and moccasins, and to take care of you. Stay and eat with us, and then take your child and depart and none shall molest you." Fearing to irritate the Indian by any sign of impatience, the heartbroken old man entered the lodge, and sat down with his daughter to a dish of boiled buffalo meat. While eating, a young savage who had assisted at the massacre of his family came in, and, holding out his bow and arrows to Hess, said, "I used these once to your sorrow. Do you know the use of them?"

His anger for a moment overcame every motive for caution. He sprang to his feet, seized the weapons, and, drawing the arrow to the head, replied, "Stand off a little, and I will show you." For an instant, the life of the Indian was in danger. But the other inter-

fered, "You are a fool," said he; "go away, and let the white man depart in peace."

Hess found his way back to Lac au Travers in safety; and the daughter, thus redeemed, was afterwards married to an Indian trader.

Hess afterwards went to Washington with Major Taliaferro, as interpreter to a deputation of Indians. Soon after his return, he died, and was buried on the banks of the St. Peter's River.

CAPTAIN HUBBELL DEFENDING HIS BOAT

Captain William Hubbell of Vermont emigrated with his family to what is now Frankfort, Kentucky, but at that time, 1790, was only a small frontier settlement. During the following year business of importance called him to the Eastern States, which, having been satisfactorily accomplished, he started on his return, and arrived at one of the branches of the Monongahela River, without accident, although the Indians were still troublesome, but more especially in the vicinity of the Ohio River.

Here he procured a flat-bottomed boat, and in company with a Mr. Daniel Light, and Mr. William Plascut and his family, consisting of his wife and eight children, who were on their way to Limestone, Kentucky, proceeded leisurely down the river. They arrived at Pittsburg without having been interrupted, or discovering any signs of Indians. But soon after passing this place, they were informed there had been many depredations committed,

and that the Indians were out in large numbers. They soon overtook and passed another boat, which had run aground, but were unable to render them any assistance from the rapidity of the current; and, passing around a short bend, they tied the boat to the shore, and waited nearly a whole day, until Captain Hubbell, fearing an attack from the Indians, and knowing they would be unable to give them any assistance, again commenced descending the river, keeping constant watch to prevent surprise.

Before reaching the mouth of the Great Kanhawa River, their number was increased by the addition of several persons, who had joined them at different places on the river, whose names were John Stoner, Messrs. Ray, Tucker, and a Mr. Kilpattrick, with his two daughters, and an Irishman, and a Dutchman, whose names are not known, making in all twenty persons, of whom nine were men, three women, and eight children.

On reaching Gallipolis, their fears were confirmed by information received from a reliable source. They, however, resolved to continue their journey; and Captain Hubbell having

been regularly chosen to command made every possible preparation for a desperate defence, in case they were attacked. The men were divided into three watches of three men each, who were to stand watch alternately, two hours at a time, throughout the night.

The arms on board consisted of a rifle and a knife to each man; some of them, however, were much out of repair. Captain Hubbell had, besides, a pair of large horse pistols. The rifles were put in the best possible condition, and then carefully loaded and primed, the men always sleeping with their arms by their sides, so as to be prepared at the first alarm, to take the posts assigned them.

They proceeded in this manner until the evening of the twenty-third of March, when they overtook a fleet of six boats descending the river in company, and congratulated themselves on the additional security they would derive from so large a force. They had, however, been in their company but a short time when they became satisfied it would be more hazardous to remain, than to part company and proceed alone, as those on board the other boat seemed disposed to have a jolly time,

drinking and dancing, without making any preparations for defence, in case of an attack. Captain Hubbell remonstrated with them, and tried to persuade them to leave off drinking, and imitate his own plans. But they only laughed at him, and kept on with dancing.

Perceiving that all he could say was unheeded, he got out the oars of his own boat, and commenced rowing down the river, so that if his boat were attacked he would not be taken unawares. The last they heard from the other boats they were singing and dancing, true to the character of the "Jolly Flat Boatmen," and were probably all killed by the Indians, as they were never heard from again. One of the boats, however, commanded by Captain Greathouse, followed the example of Captain Hubbell and for a while kept up with his boat, but becoming weary of rowing they ceased their efforts, and fell behind.

Early in the night, Captain Hubbell, being on the watch, discovered a canoe slowly floating down the river, which he at once concluded contained Indian scouts, reconnoitering; and, from signs which they observed on shore, they felt sure they were watched by a large party of

Indians, who would wait only for a favorable opportunity to attack them.

The men, with the exception of the watch, threw themselves on the cabin floor to sleep, with the understanding that if the attack should be deferred until just before daybreak, as it probably would be, they would, upon the first alarm, all take their stations, and make as much show of numbers and strength as possible to intimidate the Indians, and show them they were not to be taken without a desperate resistance. Captain Hubbell remained up all night, fearing the watch might become careless, and allow the savages to approach without giving alarm. He had, indeed, obtained but little sleep since leaving Pittsburg.

Just before daylight, while the men were still sleeping, as the boat approached a bend in the river, a voice hailed them in a plaintive tone, and begged them to come ashore and take on board two white men, who had, during the night, escaped from the Indians, and were in a starving condition, without either arms or ammunition; and that unless they would take them on board, they must either starve or be again taken by the Indians.

Captain Hubbell was not to be so easily deceived, but immediately suspected it was an Indian artifice to throw them off their guard; and, if they should near the shore, instead of finding white men they would be boarded by Indians, and either secured as prisoners or murdered at once. He therefore called up the men, and got out the sweeps, without paying any attention to the voice on shore, which soon changed to insult; and but a short time after, they discovered three canoes filled with Indians rapidly approaching them. Keeping two men at the oars, the rest threw overboard the chairs, tables, and everything else that would impede their action, and then, telling the women and children to lie down on the floor of the cabin, they piled the trunks and other baggage around them, forming a sort of bulwark which would protect them from the balls of the Indians. Having made every preparation for defence, they determined to die rather than allow the women and children to fall into the hands of their foes.

Captain Hubbell now called to the two men to cease rowing, and for all hands to take their guns, but not to fire until the Indians were so

near "that the flash of the guns would singe their eyebrows," and to be careful to fire successively, so that there should be no interval. These orders had hardly been delivered when the canoes arrived, each containing from twenty-five to thirty warriors. Ranging themselves, one on the bow, one at the stern, and another at the right hand of the boat, they were able to rake it in all directions. They then commenced firing; and at the first fire, Mr. Tucker was wounded in the thigh so severely that his leg hung only by the flesh, the bone being shattered. Mr. Light was also slightly wounded.

Captain Hubbell allowed them to approach still nearer, and then gave the word to fire, which was obeyed with so much spirit and skill that the Indians were thrown into confusion, and their advance checked for a time; but they soon rallied again. Captain Hubbell had fired his own gun, and then seizing Mr. Tucker's raised it to his shoulder, when a ball came and carried away the lock; he coolly turned and, seizing a brand from under the kettle which served as a caboose, applied it to the pan, discharging the gun, and killing his man. The

firing was now pretty sharp on both sides, but with more effect on the Indians than on the party in the boat; as the sides, being made of thick plank, formed a sort of breastwork, while the Indians were fully exposed.

At this time, Captain Hubbell being in the act of firing his gun was hit by a ball, which passed through his left arm, touching the cords, and causing them to contract, and for a few minutes completely disabling him. He had just recovered the use of it, when he discovered the Indians in the canoe at the bow of the boat just about to board her. Seizing his heavy horse pistols, he rushed forward with one in each hand just as two of them had got astride the side of the boat, and were preparing to spring in. Pointing a pistol at the breast of each, he fired, and they both fell backward into the river. Two others had a hold of the sides of the boat, with their heads just in sight. Raising one of his pistols, he brought it down on the head of one, and then of the other, with such force as to break the skull and kill them instantly, making four he had killed in less time than it takes to relate it. Others

POINTING A PISTOL AT THE BREAST OF EACH, HE FIRED.

still attempting to come on board, he seized a heavy stick of wood which laid at his feet, and, as soon as they placed their hands on the sides of the boat, with a heavy blow he crushed their fingers, sending them back into the water, howling with pain.

So desperate was his defence, they at last withdrew, followed by the rest of the canoes, and directed their course to the boat of Captain Greathouse, which had just come in sight, which they boarded without resistance, those on board retreating to the cabin, without making a single effort to repel them. They then rowed the boat to the shore, and at once tomahawked Captain Greathouse, and a boy about fourteen years old; placing the women in the canoes, and recruiting their number from those on shore, they returned again to the attack of Captain Hubbell's boat. As they approached, they placed the women in such a position as to shelter themselves, and those in the boat were obliged to run the risk of shooting them, or allow the Indians to approach without offering any resistance. They chose the former alternative, believing that if they were

captured themselves, it would not benefit the women; and if they should happen to hit them, it would most likely save them from a worse fate.

There were now but four men on the boat capable of making resistance, and the captain himself wounded in two places, and hardly able to handle his rifle; but they were as resolute as ever, and determined never to surrender. As soon, therefore, as the Indians came within a proper distance, they fired upon them, and, having loaded all their rifles, they were able to give them a warm reception and keep up a constant firing by passing the guns to their wounded comrades as soon as they were discharged, to be again loaded; and, although they were only about as one to twenty, such was their courage and determination that the Indians became discouraged, and again, one after the other, returned to the shore. Just as the last canoe was leaving, Captain Hubbell called to the Indian who was steering, and, as he turned round, fired at him, and with a yell he sprang up and fell over the side of the canoe into the water. They had now twice repulsed

the Indians, but the danger was not yet all over, for on turning from the canoes they found the boat had drifted almost on to a point of land, which the Indians on shore had discovered, and were rushing down upon it to the number of four or five hundred.

Ray and Plascut, who were the only men on board who were uninjured, immediately took the oars, and hanging some blankets so as to screen them from the shore rowed out towards the middle of the river; the rest of the party threw themselves into the bottom of the boat, with the exception of Mr. Kilpattrick, who occupied a position in which he could see the Indians on shore, and, observing one who appeared to take a more active part than the rest, he could not resist the temptation to fire at him, although warned of the danger by Captain Hubbell, and, raising himself, he had hardly brought the gun to his shoulder when a ball struck him in the mouth, and he fell back dead, almost into the arms of his daughters.

So near had the boat drifted to the point that, before they could get headway upon her, she was within twenty feet of it. The Indians

had kept up a continual firing upon them until they were beyond their reach. Four out of five of the horses which were on board were killed, and the oars in the hands of Ray and Plascut were repeatedly struck by the balls, but they remained uninjured. Their escape seems almost a miracle.

Thus ended the conflict, two of the party only having been killed outright—Tucker and Kilpattrick—and one mortally wounded—Stoner—dying the next day. All, however, but Ray and Plascut were badly wounded..

The women and children escaped injury, with the exception of a son of Mr. Plascut, who, after the battle was ended, came to the captain and coolly asked him to cut a ball from his head. Captain Hubbell could not at first believe there was one there but upon examination he found that a ball, which had passed through the side of the boat and, becoming nearly spent, had entered the forehead of the little fellow, still remained under the skin. Taking his knife, he easily cut it out. "That is not all," said the boy, and holding up his arm showed a piece of bone hanging by the

skin from the point of his elbow, which had been struck by a ball, and a piece of the bone split off. His mother now, in a voice of sympathy, asked him why he had not spoken of it before. "Because," said the little hero, "the captain told us to keep still during the battle, and I thought if I told you, you would be frightened, and make a noise."

They reached Limestone about midnight of the same day, where their story was hardly credited by the inhabitants. But, upon examining the boat, it was found that the sides were literally filled with bullets and bullet holes, there not being a space of two feet square above the water which had not received a shot. The blankets which had been used as screens while rowing past the point, receiving in the space of five feet square no less than one hundred and twenty balls; and on one of the oars were the marks of ten balls, and on the other nine, which were made while in the hands of Ray and Plascut. Captain Hubbell reached his home in Frankfort, and recovered from his wounds.

The bodies of Captain Greathouse, and the women and children who were with him in the

boat, were afterwards found near the spot where they were attacked; and from the appearance of the women and children, it was supposed they had been whipped to death, as their bodies were covered with stripes, and large rods were found near them, which seemed to have been worn out with use.

THE PIONEER BOYS

By the fall of the year 1793, the settlement known as Carpenter's Station, located a little distance above the mouth of Short Creek, on the east side of the Ohio River, in what is now the state of West Virginia, was in a flourishing condition, and numbered some thirty or forty families in its population. One of these families was named Johnson, and consisted of the father and mother and several children. Of these children, two were boys, named John and Henry Johnson, and aged respectively thirteen and eleven years. Towards the close of the fall, the boys were sent one evening to drive home the cows, which had wandered off beyond the settlement. The season was that delightful Indian summer time, when the Ohio Valley puts on its richest hues of beauty, and when the fascination of its scenery is greater than at any other part of the year. The boys, young as they were, were keenly alive to the beauty of the scene, and moved along briskly, but, boylike, when they had reached the foot of a hill which bounded the "bottom" that lay

back of the fort, they paused under a hickory-nut tree, unable to resist its fascination, and commenced to gather the nuts and crack and eat them. They sat down at the base of the tree, and, unmindful that the sunset was coming on and that the cows were still undiscovered, they gave their whole attention to their nuts. So you see, my dear reader, pioneer boys were quite as apt to attend to pleasure before business, as those of the present day, and I am very much inclined to believe that these two thought more of squirrels and nuts than about the cows and their parents. They happened to look up at last, and John jumped to his feet in confusion, and exclaimed:

"We'll catch it now, Hen. Yonder come father and Uncle Joseph, and, if they find us here instead of looking after the cows, they'll make us smoke for it."

Henry looked in the direction indicated by his brother, and saw two men approaching them. The newcomers were dressed like the settlers at the Station, and one of them carried a bridle in his hand. The boys commenced looking about very busily, and calling the cows as loud as they could. In a few minutes the

strangers came near enough for them to discover their real character, and the little fellows to their horror and dismay found that they were in the presence of two large Indians. They were terribly frightened, and started to run away, but the Indians levelled their guns at them, and threatened to kill them if they did not come back. Trembling in every limb the boys walked back slowly to their captors, expecting every moment to be killed and scalped.

One of the Indians could converse tolerably well in English, and he told the boys they would not harm them if they would not run away. He said they were looking for horses, and that the lads must go with them. They started off and taking a circuitous route over the Short Creek hills continued their search after horses. Little Henry was very much frightened, but his brother, John, contrived to whisper to him not to cry or show the Indians that he was alarmed, and to let him do the talking. John became very friendly with the Indians, and seemed to be delighted at his capture. He told them he was glad they had taken him prisoner, that his father was a hard

master, and kept him always at work, allowing him no time for play. He did not like such a life, but wanted to be free, and live in the woods, and be a hunter. He hoped they would take him to their tribe and make a warrior of him. The Indians were surprised and delighted at this language from a pale face, and the one who could speak English told him they would make a great brave out of him, and that by the time he was grown he would have no white blood in him, but would be altogether an Indian. He became very intimate with the lad during their tramp, and gave him a small bag to carry. This bag was quite heavy, and the boy supposed it contained money.

About dusk the Indians halted at a spring in a hollow place, about three miles from the fort. They built a fire and cooked their supper which they shared with their prisoners. John Johnson made himself very useful in building the fire, and getting water for his captors, and received many grunts of satisfaction and approval. One of them asked him if he knew where there were any horses running about in the woods, but the boy, thinking it best to tell them the truth this time, told them

that the settlers were very careful, and kept their horses tied up all the time, and that he did not think they would meet with much success in their efforts. When night came, the Indians covered up the fire, and pinioned the boys and made them lie down together. They then placed their hoppis straps over them, and lay down, one on each side of them, on the ends of the straps. They lay awake for a long time, talking and laughing. John, who was a lively and sprightly fellow, entertained the savages with many amusing stories which made them laugh heartily. These stories he told to the Indian who could speak English, and that one in his turn related them to his companion in his own language. Poor little Henry had not spoken a word since his capture, and, though silent, he was full of indignation against his brother for wanting to become an Indian, and being so friendly with them.

John Johnson, however, was merely carrying out a plan which he had conceived immediately after their capture. The lad had been born and brought up on the frontier, where he had lived in the society of Indian-hunters all his life, and he was tolerably well versed in the art

of border warfare, and was possessed of an intelligence and a courage unusual in a boy so young. As soon as the Indians had captured his brother and himself, he had resolved to make his escape. This was his reason for telling his brother to say nothing and let him do all the talking, and he had spent all the afternoon in trying to make friends of the savages and lull their suspicions to rest. He knew that his brother would not understand his motives for acting as he did, but he could not tell him without revealing everything, and thus ruining their chance for escape. After the savages tied him and made him lie down for the night his courage almost departed from him. The Indians, as I have said, had placed their hoppis strap over the boys, and were lying upon the ends of it themselves, so that any attempt of the boys to get up would, by moving the straps, awake their captors. The situation seemed hopeless, but John determined to wait patiently and see if something more favorable did not happen. He whispered softly to his brother not to go to sleep, and after the Indians ceased talking, lay, silently thinking over the escapes of the various

Indian hunters that he knew. He remembered how Lewis Wetzel had several times regained his liberty in the face of even more formidable obstacles, for the hunter had told him the story himself. He believed that the Indians had no fear of his trying to leave them, as they had faith in the story he had told them, but how he should get out of their power he could not tell. Something must be done that night. He knew the spot where they were resting for the night, and could easily find his way back to the fort, but the next day the Indians would strike across the country towards their own people, and even should they succeed in escaping during this journey there was a strong probability of their being overhauled and retaken, or of losing their way and dying of starvation, or of wandering into a camp of Indians. The necessity, therefore, for doing something that night, if anything was to be done at all, was imperative. The boy's mind was busy with these thoughts, but he felt that it was useless to make even the slightest attempt as long as the Indians were awake. The suspense in which the little fellow was placed was painful, and, in spite of the chilliness

of the night, the thick sweat stood heavy on his forehead.

At last the heavy breathing of the savages convinced him that they were asleep. He could not move without waking them, however, and his condition was made no better by their unconsciousness than it had been before.

The night was quite cool, and in about an hour after the savages fell asleep, one of them, becoming cold, lifted John in his arms and rolled him on the outside, and was soon breathing heavily again. This was just what the lad wanted. The Indian had put him where he could move without disturbing the others, and had not only removed the strap from him, but had rolled off of it himself. Profiting by this, the boy slowly and cautiously rolled away from his companions, and commenced trying to undo the thongs with which his hands were tied. Fortunately for him, the Indians had not fastened him very securely. He worked slowly and softly, so slowly, indeed, that it seemed that he would never free himself. Every movement seemed to his excited imagination more violent than was prudent, and he dreaded lest the Indians should suddenly

awake and discover his attempt to escape. In such a case, he felt sure they would kill him. The time wore away very slowly, but at length he succeeded in removing his fetters, and, rising gently to his feet, he looked around to assure himself that all was well. The huge forms of the Indians were stretched out at full length, and their heavy, regular breathing showed him that they were sound asleep. Another glance revealed to him the great, round, blue eyes of his little brother, Henry, watching his movements with the most intense eagerness. He placed his finger warningly on his lips to caution the little fellow not to make any sound that might alarm the savages, and then stepping cautiously to the boy's side, he raised the strap softly, and motioned to his brother to get upon his feet. The astonished Henry did so, and his brother led him softly a few paces away from the sleepers, and commenced to untie his hands.

How their hearts beat, as they stood there in the dark woods with danger and death so near them! The very sighing of the night wind, the rustling of the leaves, and the murmuring of the waters of the little stream, by

which they had encamped, made them start and tremble with fear. The slightest sound might arouse their captors, and then, poor boys, home and a mother's face would never gladden their eyes again.

At last Henry's hands were released, and the boy, intent only upon getting off safe, whispered to his brother:

"Come now, brother John, let us run home as fast as we can."

John knew this would never do. Henry would be sure to arouse the Indians in attempting to run away, and he seized the little fellow, who had already turned to put his proposal into execution, by the shoulder firmly, and whispered to him:

"Don't run away yet, Hen. If you do, you'll wake the Indians, and they'll kill us. You mustn't stir yet, for we must kill these Indians before we go."

Henry was afraid at first, for he was a very little fellow, and only eleven years old, and the idea of his killing one of the great stalwart savages that lay sleeping at his feet seemed to him an utter impossibility; but his brother told him that he must make the attempt, and after

some hesitation, the little fellow consented to do so.

The plan upon which John had decided would have done credit to an old hunter, and it is remarkable as coming from a boy so young, inasmuch as it exhibits an unusual degree of originality, fertility of resource, and determined courage. The lad was only thirteen years old, but had he been fifty he could not have acted with greater coolness and determination. Stealing noiselessly up to the Indians, he took one of their rifles, which was loaded and primed, and, cocking it, placed it on a log with the muzzle only an inch or two from the head of one of the Indians. He then placed Henry at the breech of the weapon, and made him pull the trigger, and shoot the savage as soon as he should strike the other. Then stepping back, he possessed himself of the Indian's tomahawk, as he found that it would be impossible to remove the rifle without arousing its owner. He grasped the tomahawk firmly, and then assuring himself by a glance that his younger brother was ready to co-operate with him, he stepped softly to the sleepers, and placed himself astride of one of them. They were still

unconscious, the fatigue of their long march on the previous day having thrown them into a profound slumber. The boy raised the tomahawk with both hands, and, concentrating all his energies in the blow, struck the sleeper with it. The blow fell on the back of the Indian's neck, and a little to the side, so as not to be fatal. Half stunned, the savage attempted to spring up and defend himself, but John struck him again, this time on the head. Even this blow, though it cut through the skull with a horrible crash, did not kill the man, but the little fellow, rendered desperate by the gravity of his situation, struck him so fast and so often, and with such fatal effect, that, as the lad afterwards expressed it himself, "the Indian lay still, and began to quiver." In another moment, the huge savage lay motionless at his feet, and, having satisfied himself that there was nothing more to apprehend from this one, John turned to see what disposition his brother had made of the other.

Little Henry had also done his part well. As soon as he saw his elder brother strike the Indian with the tomahawk, he pulled the trigger and discharged the rifle. The ball struck

the sleeping savage in the face, and tore away a considerable portion of his lower jaw. The Indian, a few moments after receiving the shot began to flounce about and yell in the most terrible manner. He was so completely startled by the suddenness of the attack that he did not for a moment attribute it to his captives, and his wound was so terrible as to utterly deprive him for the time of the power of resistance, and as soon as he had fired Henry dropped the rifle, and hurried over to where his brother was standing. All this had taken scarcely as much time as I have consumed in telling it, and the boys at once set off for the fort. They travelled rapidly, and reached the fort a little after daybreak. They were in constant dread all the way that the Indian who had been shot, and who they knew had not been killed would pursue them and take vengeance on them. As they approached the fort, they found the settlers all awake and up, and in the greatest alarm and distress concerning them. Their mother, surrounded by a group of sympathetic friends, was weeping bitterly over their supposed unhappy fate.

"Poor little fellows," she sobbed, "they are killed or taken prisoners."

John's heart was in his throat, at the sight of his mother's grief, and rushing to her, he cried out eagerly:

"No, mother, we are here safe and sound."

You may be sure there was joy in the fort over the return of the two lost ones. John told the story of their capture and escape, but it seemed to the settlers so utterly improbable that two such children had killed two Indian warriors that the story was not believed. John then offered to guide a party to the scene of the tragedy, and a small detachment was sent out to ascertain the truth of the boy's statement. They reached the camp, and found there the dead body of the Indian whom John had tomahawked, but the one Henry had shot had managed to crawl away and take his gun and ammunition with him. He could not be found, but his skeleton and gun were discovered some time afterwards. These things confirmed the truth of the boy's story, and they were after that the pride and boast of the settlement.

The Indians, who were killed, were great

warriors, and very wealthy. The bag, which John had seen and carried on the previous evening, and which he supposed contained money, was never found. It was believed that one of the men in the fort, upon hearing the boy's story, had started for the spot in advance of the party and secured the money.

The Indians themselves did honor to the bravery of the two boys. After their treaty with General Wayne, a friend of the Indians who were killed asked a man from Short Creek what had become of the boys who killed the two warriors? Upon being told that they were residing at home with their parents, he expressed his surprise.

"Ah," said he, "you have not done right; you should make kings of those boys."

JAMES MOORE'S CAPTIVITY

"I was a mere lad then," said the old man, in an absent, far-away manner, as if his thoughts had gone back to that distant time. "I was a mere lad then, but I mind well the day, and if I live to be a hundred years old, I shall never forget it."

The speaker was an old man of eighty-three, and I was a lad of fourteen. He was one of those who had driven the red men from the border, and laid the foundation of that mighty and glorious West, of which Americans are so justly proud. We were sitting on the banks of the Ohio, nearly sixteen years ago, watching one of those magnificent "floating palaces," then very numerous, but now driven almost entirely from the river by the railroads, and my companion was saying how little he thought, when a young man, that he should ever live to see the country so powerful and prosperous. I knew he had once been a prisoner in the hands of the Indians, and that he had been through a life of exciting adventure, and I asked him if he remembered the time when he

had crossed the Ohio as the captive of the savages, and to this question he gave the above reply.

"If I am not asking too much, Mr. Moore," I said, "will you tell me the story of your capture and captivity?"

"With all my heart, lad," said the old man, smiling. "You young people of to-day ought to know what we old folks went through years ago to provide these comforts, and the best way for you to learn the truth is to hear it from the lips of those of us who are left.

"I was taken prisoner on the 7th of September, 1784, when I was in my fourteenth year. Previous to this my father, about the year 1775, removed from his house near the Natural Bridge, in Rockbridge County, Virginia, and settled on the waters of the Blue Stone, a branch of the New River, in Abbs Valley, which is now a part of Tazewell County, Virginia. He chose that section on account of the great fertility of the soil, and its peculiar adaptation to the raising of stock. His family consisted at this time of himself, wife and six children, of whom three were boys, I being the oldest. As I said, my father devoted his

attention principally to stock-raising. He usually kept about one hundred horses and a number of cattle. Our situation was very lonely, however, being remote from the settlements, and consequently exposed to the incursions of the Indians; but in spite of this, we lived there for nine years without experiencing any injury at their hands, except the loss of a few horses. At the end of that time I was captured, and two years later my father and his family, with the single exception of my younger sister, were massacred by the savages, and our home destroyed.

"On the morning of the 7th of September, 1784, my father informed me that our stock of corn meal was nearly exhausted, and that I must go to a waste plantation which belonged to him, about two miles and a half distant from the house, and catch a horse, on which I must go to the mill for a load of meal. We lived about twelve miles from the mill, and the road, which led for the whole distance through a dreary wilderness, was very lonely. The trip would take me some time, and, as I had no desire to make a part of it after nightfall, I set off at once for the horse. As I en-

tered the woods, they seemed darker and gloomier than ever to me, and, for the life of me, I could not prevent a vague, indefinable feeling of dread from stealing over me. I could not tell why it was or how it was, but for some reason I became possessed of the idea that there was a huge and ferocious wild beast in the forest, and that I was destined to be devoured by him that day. As I went on this feeling grew stronger, and I found myself trembling in every limb. For awhile I was tempted to turn back and go home; but I reflected that my father would, in all probability, think light of my fears, give me a sound scolding, and send me back, and I determined to keep on. The day was mild and warm, but my nervousness became so great that I found my teeth chattering as with a hard ague.

"At length I emerged from the woods, and entered the field in which I expected to find the horses. Suddenly three Indians sprang from behind a log where they had lain concealed, and one of them seized me by the shoulder. I did not see them at first, and, when I felt the fellow grip my shoulder, I felt confident that I had fallen into the clutches of

the animal I had been dreading, and I screamed with all my might. The Indian who had seized me tightened his hold upon me at this, and told me in the Indian language to hush. At the sound of his voice I turned and looked at him, and, strange as it may seem, I felt greatly relieved to find that my captor was an Indian, instead of the dreadful beast my fancy had conjured up; for I could not help thinking it far better to fall into the clutches of the Indians than to be at the mercy of a wild animal.

"'What need I fear?' I said to myself. 'All that is in it is, I shall have to go to the Shawnee towns with them.'

"My captors were three in number, and consisted of a father, his son, and another Indian, the two younger savages being about eighteen years old. The father was a middle-aged man, of herculean frame, with a long, black beard (something remarkable in one of his race), and the sternest face I ever saw. They were all of the Shawnee tribe, and were armed with rifles. The oldest Indian was named Black Wolf, and his general appearance was fully in keeping with his title. As the Black Wolf was my captor I belonged to

him, and was, henceforth, to be considered as his slave, until he should choose to sell or kill me, either of which things he had, by the laws of his people, a perfect right to do.

"After taking me prisoner, the savages carried me to an old, deserted cabin in the field to which I had been sent by my father. The horses were grazing in the meadow in full view, and not over a quarter of a mile from us. The Black Wolf explained to me that I would have to catch a horse for each of them, and one for myself, as they were determined to ride back home. He gave me a handful of salt, and ordered me to set about my work at once. I obeyed him with alacrity, for it was my intention to catch a horse as quick as possible, mount it and make my escape. Something in my face must have revealed my design, for the Indians were quick to suspect it, and as often as I would get hold of a horse they would come running up, and thus scare him away. This was continued for nearly an hour, and at last, finding that I could not catch a horse for myself, I determined I would not do so for one of them, and gave up the attempt, telling them if they wanted a horse, to catch one for them-

selves. They tried to do so, but were forced to abandon their efforts in great disgust; for the animals, with an instinct as true as that of a human being, avoided them, and thus escaped the fate which had befallen me. I was glad of it, for, although I knew I would have to accompany my master on foot, I felt a kind of savage joy in thinking that he and his companions would be subject to the same fatigue they compelled me to endure, besides failing to secure the object of their expedition, the horses.

"This I supposed was between twelve and one o'clock in the day, for I estimated the time from the position of the sun, as my father had taught me. Failing to secure the animals, the Indians went into a thicket near by and brought out their kettle and blankets, which they had concealed there upon their arrival in the neighborhood, and we at once set out upon our journey. The country over which we passed was very mountainous, and full of logs, rocks, high weeds and green briers, and these impeded our march so much that it was with difficulty we could move at all, so that when evening came we had gone only eight miles

from the place of my capture. The two young Indians went in front, I followed them, and the Black Wolf brought up the rear. I had made up my mind to go quietly with the Indians, and trust to the mercy of Heaven for my safety, but, at the same time, to take advantage of any circumstance that might enable me to escape; and as I was every moment going further from my friends, and deeper into the wilderness, I tried to make a trail by breaking off twigs from the bushes and bark from the trees, as we passed along. I thought my action was unobserved, but I was soon convinced to the contrary by the old Wolf, who shook his tomahawk at me and ordered me to desist. Then I tried to scratch the ground with my feet, but the old fellow soon discovered this, and put a stop to it. He showed me how to put my feet down flat in walking, so as not to leave any mark behind, and threatened me with instant death if I did not comply with his order. I had no alternative but to submit, and walked along passively with them, which conduct the Indians greeted with a grunt of approval.

"In the evening, about sundown, old Wolf

gave a tremendous war-whoop, and I thought for a moment that it was but the prelude to my death; but I found that it was the custom of the savages to do this at sunset and sunrise each day, when travelling with prisoners. The number of prisoners was denoted by the number of whoops. They also whooped when they came back from a foray with scalps, though this whoop was an entirely different sound. In this way they made it known, as far as the sound could be heard, whether they had scalps or prisoners, and how many.

"We had neither food nor fire, and the night was rainy and chill. The Black Wolf searched me carefully to see whether I had a knife, and, finding none, prepared for our night's rest. He tied one end of a leading halter around my neck, and wrapped the other around his hand, so as to make sure of me. In this situation I could not possibly attempt to escape without waking him, and there was very little chance of that after he was awake. We lay down in a laurel thicket, and, in spite of the extreme discomfort of my situation, I managed to sleep a little during the night. I was always of a very philosophic turn, and I resigned my-

self to my fate with a fortitude that was not at all proportioned to my tender age.

"The next morning at daybreak we resumed our march and followed the shore of Tug Creek for several miles, until we reached the main ridge of Tug Mountain, along which we descended until we came to Maxwell's Gap, a pass in the mountains which derived its name from a man named Maxwell who was killed there by this same Black Wolf and a band of Indians. We halted here, and old Wolf went off and soon returned, bringing a moderate-sized Dutch oven, which he had stolen and secreted on some former expedition. This oven he ordered me to carry, and, afraid to refuse, I obeyed him. He tied the oven to my back, where it was continually striking and bruising me as we descended the mountain side. At last, having suffered real torture from it, I threw it down, and declared I would carry it no further. The Black Wolf then set his own burden down, and, ordering me to carry it, took up the oven. I took hold of the bundle, but found I could not lift it. I then became more reconciled to my lot, and, shouldering the oven again, trudged on with it.

"We continued to march along the mountain ridge all day, and encamped on it at night. Towards dark it commenced to rain, and the son of the Black Wolf pulled off my hat. Supposing he wanted it for his own head, I became angry at what I considered the insult, and struck him and took the hat from him. The fellow, however, showed me that he merely wanted it to protect the lock of his gun from the rain, and I let him have it. After the rain he returned it to me.

"We travelled in this way for three days, during which time we had not a mouthful to eat. This deprivation did not fall so hard on the Indians, as they were used to long fasts; but it came very hard upon me, who had been accustomed to the regular meals of my race. I became literally faint with hunger, and began to fear that I should give out from sheer exhaustion. Our only sustenance was water, with a little poplar bark steeped in it. / On the fourth day, however, the Black Wolf killed a buffalo, and we cut it up and took out its paunch, of which, after cleansing it in clear water, we made a broth, mixing with it some pieces of meat during the cooking process.

We drank heartily of this broth, but did not eat any of the meat. At night we made another kettle of broth, but did not touch the meat. The Indians always pursued this policy after a long fast, as they understood, by intuition, I suppose, the danger of trying to make the stomach digest strong food when weakened by long abstinence.

"I had now been travelling for four days barefooted, and, in consequence of this, I had four stone bruises on each foot, and my sufferings were excruciating. The way was rough, and bruised and cut my feet terribly. Sometimes I would walk over rattlesnakes, dreading every moment to be stung by them; but the Indians would not let me kill the reptiles, as they considered them friends. The savages were provided with moccasins, and could travel without inconvenience, so that it mattered little to them how much I suffered. They tarried not an instant on my account, and I was forced to push on with them, limping and groaning inwardly, but too proud to show by the tears which struggled to come to my eyes, but which I resolutely forced back, how much I suffered from their cruel indifference.

"A few days after this, one of the Indians killed another buffalo. The animal was very fat, and we cut off and dried enough of his flesh to last us several days, and, from this time until we reached the Indian settlements, we killed and ate buffaloes and deer, as we had need for and could find them. Fortunately this kind of game was in abundance along our route, and we were very well off in the matter of food as long as our journey continued. We crossed the Ohio River at a point between the mouth of Guyandot and Big Sandy. As we had no canoe, the Indians took several dry logs which were found in the woods on the shore, and, tying them together with wild grape-vines, made a kind of rude raft on which we passed over to the state of Ohio, or the Indian Shore, as it was then called. Shortly after this we reached the banks of the Scioto, and here, to my great relief, the Indians encamped one day. Here they made pictures or hieroglyphics to represent three Indians with one prisoner. This they did to show their tribe, or such members of it as should pass that way, that they had encamped there with one white man in their power. After this we crossed the Scioto.

"On the twentieth day after my capture, we came in sight of the Shawnee towns, near what is now the city of Chillicothe, in the state of Ohio. As we approached the towns, the Indians halted and painted themselves black. My heart sunk within me as I saw them engaged in this ceremony, for I feared that I should be the next object of their artistic skill, and I knew enough about Indian customs, having heard of them from the older settlers and hunters, to understand that, if they did paint my face, it would be a sign that they had doomed me to death by the torture, or some other equally diabolical means. To my great joy, however, they did not touch me, but having painted themselves to their satisfaction, continued their march. This I knew meant that I was spared, at least, for the present; but I was by no means sure how long this unusual clemency would continue. As it was a time of peace, and the Indians were not, according to their ideas, at war with the whites, my master was not obliged to treat me as the captive of the tribe. He had been off on a private expedition, and I was, therefore, his own property, to dispose of as he pleased. Instead, there-

fore, of taking me into the town, the Black Wolf carried me to the residence of his half-sister, which was in the vicinity of the settlement. He was very anxious to own a horse, and, as he had failed to capture one on the expedition from which he was returning, he was determined to make use of me to procure one; so, after bargaining, he sold me to the woman for an old horse. I hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry at my change of owners; for, with the exception of compelling me to keep up with his party on the march, when I could scarcely walk, the Black Wolf had treated me very kindly, and I did not know whether my new mistress would be as considerate. She proved, however, to be equal to her brother in humanity. A few days after purchasing me, she left me alone in the wigwam for several days, leaving me a kettle of boiled hominy for food. I was very lonely and depressed, and in my trouble I turned to my Heavenly Father for comfort. I had enjoyed a religious education in my father's family, and I now found out the value of it. After casting my burdens on the Lord, I rose and went about cheerfully, feeling sure that he had

heard and would deliver me in his own good time. I do not think I could have kept my reason during my captivity, but for this comforting trust in the mercy of an over-ruling Providence.

"My new mistress returned in a few days, and, as she had no other servant, I was made to perform all the duties necessary to the success of her domestic establishment. She was very strict, very exacting; but, in other respects, I had no reason to complain of her.

"In about two weeks after my arrival at the settlement, my mistress sent me, with a party of Indians, all of us under the charge of the Black Wolf, on a hunting expedition. We were very unsuccessful, and succeeded in taking scarcely game enough to keep us alive, having literally nothing to carry back to the settlement. The winter had set in early, and, though it was only the middle of October, the snow was knee-deep on the ground, and the weather was intensely cold. My blanket was entirely too short for me, coming scarcely to my knees, and my sufferings from the cold, added to those which I experienced from the absence of food, were intense. My clothing, which was

suited only to the early autumn weather, was almost worn out, and often when I laid down I would have to draw my legs and feet up until I was bent double, to get them under the blanket. The next morning when I awoke, I was so benumbed and stiff that it was with difficulty I could straighten myself. The Black Wolf kept a sharp eye to my health and to that of the young Indians who were with us, and every morning, in spite of the freezing weather, he would make us plunge all over in cold water. I did this only upon compulsion, but I am glad of it now, for I believe it hardened me, and kept me from taking cold and suffering more from the severity of the weather. I was in hopes that this severity of the weather, and the absence of game from the hunting-grounds, would induce the Indians to return to the settlement, for it seemed very evident to me, and I thought it must appear so to them, that our hunt was destined to be profitless; but the difficulties which lay in our way only served to increase their zeal, and we spent the entire winter in the woods and snow. I thought I should perish before the season was over, but, through the mercy of Providence, I was spared.

"Early in the spring we set out on our return to the settlement. We carried with us little or no game, and consequently met with but a cold reception from those we had left behind, and who had been impatiently expecting our return. A few days after this a party of white traders from Detroit came into the settlement, and one of them, seeing me and hearing my story, persuaded the Black Wolf, who was a firm friend of his, to give me to him. This the Black Wolf did with more cheerfulness than I had expected, and I began to entertain the hope of being able to return to my own race and family, when my mistress, angry at the disposition her brother had made of her property—which fact may, after all, account for the extreme generosity of the Black Wolf—threatened the trader with a severe punishment at the hands of the tribe, and compelled him to give me back to her. I bade adieu with a sad heart to my new friend, and for two more months I stayed among the savages.

"At the end of that time, I went with my mistress to attend a dance at a town about two miles from where I resided. At this dance it was my good fortune to meet a French trader

from Detroit. This good man, pitying my condition, and struck with my resemblance to one of his sons, bought me from my mistress for fifty dollars in Indian money—that is a small quantity of silver brooches, crosses and the like. I accompanied my new friend to Detroit the next day, and with him passed the next three years, when I was able to return to my friends in Virginia. The trader and his wife, while I lived with them, were like parents to me, and I shall never cease to cherish their memory. I frequently accompanied my protector in his trading expeditions among the Indians, and always did what I could to alleviate the sufferings of those of my race whom I found in the power of the savages. On one of these trading expeditions I heard of the massacre of my father and his family, with the exception of my sister, who was a captive, and after some time I succeeded in effecting her release, and carried her with me back to Virginia.

"This, my dear young friend, is the story of my captivity. Thank Heaven, your generation is spared the horrors which surrounded mine."

LEWIS WETZEL'S SCOUT

One of the most famous and daring hunters of the early days of the West was Lewis Wetzel. He was the son of John Wetzel, a German, who settled on Big Wheeling, in western Virginia, among the first white men who went to that region. His education was that of a hunter and a warrior. He imbibed at an early age many of the wild and savage ideas of the Indians, and always seemed more at home with his rifle and the woods than in the company of civilized beings. He was possessed of almost superhuman powers of endurance, and could go without food and drink longer, and incur more fatigue and exposure than any other hunter of his day. As a marksman, he had very few equals and no superiors. It was an occurrence so remote as to be almost an impossibility, for any human being to escape death when once the rifle of Lewis Wetzel was aimed at him "with the intent to kill." When a boy, he adopted the practice of loading his rifle as he ran, and by the time he grew to man's estate, he was such a proficient in this accomplish-

ment that he could load while running at full speed as well as when standing still. This was an accomplishment peculiar to Wetzel himself, and, owing to it, he rarely failed to come out of his encounters with the Indians victorious. He hated the redskins bitterly, and it was not long before he became a terror to them. With his own hand he slew twenty-seven Indians in the single state of West Virginia, and as many more along the frontier settlements of Kentucky during the Indian wars. He escaped all their plans and snares set for him, however, and died in his bed at a good age, after having the satisfaction of seeing the power of the Indians along the Ohio broken forever.

When he was only thirteen years old, he was captured by a party of Indians, together with his brother Jacob, who was two years his junior. He made a bold resistance, however, and was wounded in the breast before being taken prisoner, the bullet carrying away a piece of his breastbone, which caused him great suffering. The second night after the boys were taken, the Indians encamped at the Big Lick, twenty miles from the Ohio River, on the waters of McMahon's Creek. The boys were not tied

as the savages supposed they were too young to try to run away. After the Indians had fallen asleep, Lewis whispered to his brother Jacob, that he must get up and accompany him back home. Jacob at first refused, being afraid the savages might recapture and kill them, but at length he consented to make the attempt to escape, and got up and went along with his brother. After they had gone about a hundred yards, the boys sat down on a log.

"Well," said Lewis, "we can't go home barefooted, so I'll go back and get a pair of moccasins for each of us."

With this the brave boy went back to the sleeping Indians, and absolutely took two pairs of moccasins from them without disturbing them, and rejoined his brother in safety. After sitting on the log a little longer, he said he would go back and get his father's gun, which had been captured with him; and this he also accomplished. The boys then set out for home, taking the trail by which they had come. They had not travelled far before they heard the Indians coming after them. It was a moonlight night, and they stepped aside into the bushes, let the Indians pass by, and then

fell into the trail again behind them, and on the return of the Indians they did the same thing, and when two Indians pursued them on horseback, they dodged them in the same way. They pushed on rapidly, and the next day reached Wheeling in safety, crossing from the Indian shore to Wheeling Island on a raft of their own making. They reached the settlement not a moment too soon, for by this time Lewis had become almost exhausted from his wound.

This was the first adventure of Lewis Wetzel with the Indians, and will serve to show the character of the man to whose exploits I propose to devote these pages.

In the year 1782, after Crawford's defeat, Lewis went with a man named Thomas Mills, who had been in the campaign, to get his horse, which he had left near the place where the town of St. Clairsville now stands. The two friends were travelling along leisurely, never dreaming of danger, and discussing the events of the campaign, and were even laying plans for an expedition of their own against the common enemy, when, as they reached Indian Springs, two miles from St. Clairsville, on the Wheeling

road, they came unexpectedly upon a band of forty Indians. The savages and the white men discovered each other about the same moment. With the swiftness of thought, Lewis brought his rifle to his shoulder and fired, and as usual killed an Indian. The Indians then fired a volley, and, though they missed Wetzel, shot Mills in the heel. The two white men beat a hasty retreat, and the Indians followed in hot pursuit. Poor Mills, being disabled by the wound in his heel, was soon overtaken, and despatched by the tomahawks of the savages.

Wetzel, who was famous as being one of the fleetest runners of his day, fled with the speed of a deer, and his pursuers, finding that their shots were thrown away at him, undertook a different method of overhauling him. Four of the swiftest Indians of the band were selected, and directed to throw aside their weapons and catch the daring hunter. They obeyed promptly the order of their chief, and started off with a yell. But Wetzel, calling to his aid the practice of his boyhood, loaded his rifle as he ran, and watched his chance to fire at his pursuers. The main body of the Indians, confident that the hunter would be overtaken

by the four athletes sent after him, had abandoned the pursuit, and were following leisurely. When he had gone about half a mile, Wetzel saw that one of his pursuers was within eight or ten feet of him. Now was the time to fire, and, wheeling abruptly, before the astonished savage could comprehend his intention, he shot him down. The Indian fell heavily without a groan, for the ball had entered his brain. The other three, however, followed hard upon him, and the hunter was forced to take to his heels again. He repeated his manoeuvre of loading while running, and soon had his unerring weapon cocked and primed again for another shot. Three-quarters of a mile more were passed over, and one of the Indians was so close upon him that he could almost touch him. Wheeling again, Wetzel prepared to fire, when the savage seized his gun, and with all his strength endeavored to wrest it from him. The savage was a powerful fellow, and the situation was desperate. Wetzel struggled manfully, and the Indian did likewise. The other Indians were approaching rapidly, and it seemed that they would be successful in their attempt. By

a powerful effort, Wetzel brought the muzzle of the rifle to the Indian's breast and fired. The fellow relaxed his hold, sprang into the air, and fell back a corpse. Resuming his flight, Wetzel reloaded his weapon, and turned to bring down another redskin; but the remaining two, made cautious by the fate of their comrades, sprang behind a tree as they saw him pause. He was very tired and availed himself of this to rest awhile; but, remembering that the main body of the Indians might come up at any moment, he started off again, followed by the two Indians who kept close upon his heels. Several times he paused, hoping to get a shot at the savages; but whenever he paused, they sprang to the shelter of trees. They passed over a mile of country in this way, and at length reached a clearing, where the hunter determined to bring down one of his pursuers. There were very few trees within reach, and these were so small as to be worthless as a defence. Yet the redskins, seeing Wetzel halt suddenly, sprang behind two saplings to await his movements. Watching them closely, he saw that the tree was too small to cover the body of one of the Indians, and, aiming his

rifle carefully, he fired. The ball broke the fellow's thigh, and he fell to the ground with a loud yell. The wound was a severe one, and afterwards proved fatal. Loading hastily, he prepared to complete his victory by shooting the other Indian; but the savage, thinking "discretion the better part of valor," and astonished by the wonderful weapon which Lewis carried and which had brought down three of his companions, without, as he supposed, being charged afresh, gave a loud yell and took to his heels, crying out as he went:

"No catch dat man; gun always loaded."

Wetzel did not pause to secure the scalp of the wounded Indian, as he was fearful of the arrival of the main body, but continued his retreat as rapidly as possible, and until he was near enough to the settlements to consider himself safe.

He had a friend living close by, and feeling anxious for his safety, as he knew his situation to be an exposed one, he set off for his cabin, to warn him of the proximity of the Indians, and urge him to take his family to the fort until the danger should be passed. He hurried on, and in a short while came into the clearing

which his friend, the settler, had made on his little farm. The sight which met his eyes there made him shudder and grow sick at heart, veteran hunter though he was. The cabin and fencing were in ashes, the corn was trampled down, and the result of two years' hard labor on the part of the settler were destroyed in the short space of as many hours. Wetzel pushed on at a sharp run, and in a few minutes stood by the side of what had once been the cabin. The ashes were still smoking, showing that the savages had done their work but recently. A half-charred human body lay in the midst of the ruins, and by the heavy boots on the feet the hunter recognized it as the corpse of his friend. A heap of blackened bones lay near by, showing that one of the settler's children had perished in the flames; but there were no traces of the mother and the other child, and he supposed the Indians had carried them off into captivity.

The footprints of the savages were very distinct in the soft, clayey soil, and the hunter's keen eye soon detected among them the marks of the feet of a woman and child. He followed the trail for a few hundred yards from the

house, and found that these footmarks were still as distinct, and that they were turned away from the clearing, an indication that the savages had taken their prisoners with them in their retreat. He hesitated but a short time. He was too late to warn his friends, as he had intended, and it was useless for him to remain where he was. He must either go to one of the settlements, or he must try to follow the Indians and see if he could not rescue their captives. He decided upon the latter course, and, stopping only long enough to drink at a spring near by, he started off, following the trail of the Indians. It seemed a bold undertaking for one man to attempt to pursue so many, but Lewis Wetzel was used to such efforts. He had done the same thing before, and had come out successful, and he believed he could do so again. He followed the trail rapidly, and, as the Indians had but a few hours' start of him, and would be unsuspicious of being pursued, he felt sure of coming up with them.

The day wore away without his meeting with the savages, and at length it became too dark for him to see the trail. He had become very well satisfied, however, as to where it was

leading him, and he felt confident of his ability to continue in it even in the dark. The Indians would certainly encamp for the night, and this would enable him to come up with them, and, if nothing could be done at once for the relief of the captives, he could hang about the camp during the night, and follow at a safe distance in the morning, ready to do anything in his power to aid his friends. It became necessary to be very cautious in his movements, lest he should stumble over the savages in the dark.

About two hours after nightfall, the hunter saw a ruddy glow rising through the trees and undergrowth some distance ahead, and, as he moved onward, the light grew stronger. This was beyond a doubt the glare from the Indian camp-fire, and as they might have their scouts out it was necessary to move with great caution. Another hour brought him in full view of the enemy, and by crawling upon his hands and knees, he managed to approach within fifty yards of their camp-fire.

The savages had encamped for the night beside a small brook which crossed their line of march at right angles, and, utterly unsuspi-

cious of pursuit, had taken none of their usual precautions. They had no scouts or sentinels out, but were all gathered around their fire, laughing and talking. Wetzel noticed that but four of the savages were present, and this made him uneasy, as he feared the others—four or five in number—(for there certainly had been eight or nine, in all, engaged in the destruction and massacre at the cabin of his unhappy friend the settler) might be lurking through the woods, and might stumble over him at any moment. In such a case, there was very little doubt that his temerity would result in either his death or capture. The four Indians were sitting in a group, or were huddled together, and were in high glee over something. The hunter's blood boiled as he listened to their boisterous merriment, and he clutched his rifle with an anger that boded them no good. Opposite the savages he saw the wife of his dead friend. The poor woman was sitting near the fire, with her little child, a boy about four years old, lying across her lap, and with her eyes fixed on the flames with an expression of hopeless anguish. Lewis Wetzel had seen many a sad sight in the

course of his hunter's career, and had done so with a callousness that made him believe himself hardened against all kinds of suffering; but the expression of the captive's face as she sat before him, wrung his heart with a sharp pain. If he had had any intention of abandoning his attempt to rescue the captives, the sight of that poor woman's face would have driven it from him. Come what might, he would save them, or perish with them. During all the while he lay there, the woman never moved. The child was asleep in her lap, and, with a mother's tenderness, she hushed it and watched over its sleep, even in the trying and terrible situation in which she was placed.

The time wore on, and Wetzel was becoming stiff and chilled from his cramped position. It had been fully two hours since his arrival, and, as yet, there were no signs of the absent Indians. Their companions at the camp-fire were sitting up very late, and he at first supposed they were awaiting the return of their friends; but when, at length, he saw them rise and cover up the fire preparatory to going to sleep, he was convinced that the other Indians were not expected to return that night—that

they had probably gone off on some predatory expedition. Satisfied of this, he resolved to put into instant execution a plan upon which he had determined while watching the savages. He cocked his rifle noiselessly, and took it in his left hand, while with his right he grasped his heavy tomahawk. Three of the Indians were standing near the fire, which they had just arranged for the night, and the fourth had gone to the little stream to get some water. Wetzel rose noiselessly to his feet, and, with the stealthiness of a cat, crept to within twenty feet of his foes without attracting their attention. Then balancing his body firmly, he hurled his tomahawk at the nearest Indian with all his force, striking him full on the head. The heavy weapon crushed through the skull of the savage, and brought him bleeding to the ground; for Lewis Wetzel was as expert with his tomahawk as he was with his gun. There was a yell of surprise and dismay from the other two Indians, and the next moment the sharp crack of Wetzel's rifle brought one of them down a corpse. The other savage seized his rifle, and springing behind a tree tried to find out his assailant; but as Wetzel had al-

ready availed himself of a similar protection, the fellow could discover nothing. The fourth Indian, hearing the yells of his companions and the report of the rifle, started back to the fire in alarm; but being without his weapon, which he had left where he had been sitting, he took also to a tree, no doubt thinking it best to risk as little as possible.

Meanwhile Wetzel, protected by his tree from the bullet of his tawny foe, reloaded his weapon with that celerity for which he, above all others, was famous. This done, he prepared to take advantage of the first opportunity for shooting one of the remaining Indians. The glow of the fire lit up the woods sufficiently for him to discover the first movement of the savage, who was only a few yards from him. The Indian, however, was quite as wary as his antagonist, and took good care not to expose himself in the slightest degree, and for some time the two men stood thus, watching each other, and prepared to fire at the instant either could detect the other in exposing himself.

The woman, aroused from her reverie by the firing and shouts, had started to her feet at the first, and had involuntarily caught up

one of the rifles which the Indians had left by the fire. At first Wetzel was apprehensive that the savage who had secured his gun would shoot her, but he reflected that, by doing this, the Indian would throw away his shot, and place himself at his mercy, and he knew the redskin was too well trained a warrior to do this. This satisfied him that the woman's life was safe for the present, and he called to her that aid was near, and told her to make sure of the Indian he had struck with the tomahawk by shooting him through the head. This the woman did, in a kind of mechanical way, which showed that she had not yet fully realized her situation. The surviving Indians greeted the act with a howl of rage, but, as Wetzel supposed, the armed savage did not fire. The greatest danger of all was that the unarmed Indian would rush out from his concealment and possess himself of one of the rifles by the fire; and, should he do this, the hunter's doom would be sure, or should Wetzel shoot him, he would be sure to lose his shot, and place himself at the mercy of the other Indian. To avert this, he called to the woman who was standing near the fire to take one of the

rifles and shoot the Indian, if he tried to leave his tree. He told her who he was, and begged her to lose no time. At the mention of his name, the woman's manner changed. She knew that Lewis Wetzel rarely failed in his undertakings, and her despair vanished. She seized the rifle quickly, her border life having taught her how to use it. She was not a moment too soon; for the unarmed Indian, in accordance with the result of a conversation which had been going on between himself and his companion, sprang from behind his tree and dashed towards the fire, intending to seize one of the guns. The woman, aroused now in her danger, and eager to avenge herself upon one of the murderers of her husband and child, raised the rifle quickly and fired. The savage threw up his arms, sprang into the air, and fell upon his face, shot through the heart.

The other Indian remained motionless, making no effort to avenge his companion's death. The fire was going down, and it would soon be too dark to see anything, and the hunter felt that whatever was done must be done at once. He could not venture to move an inch from his present position, which was becoming

tiresome, for such a course would draw upon him the fire of the Indian. The woman had exhibited so much nerve that he, for a moment, thought of sending her with the remaining rifle to go around to the back of the tree and drive the savage away, or shoot him; but he reflected that the Indian, rather than die by the hand of a woman, would probably kill her, preferring to fall by the hunter's hand, and not even to save his own life would Lewis Wetzel peril the safety of another. In a few minutes his ingenious brain contrived a plan which he determined to put into execution, and he bade the woman take her child and withdraw to one side.

This done, he drew the ramrod from his gun and, taking off his bear-skin cap, placed it on top of the rod, and held it out cautiously a little way beyond the tree. His intention was to make the Indian believe that, in trying to get a better look at him, he had incautiously exposed himself, and thus draw the fellow's fire. The ruse had the desired effect. Wetzel had hardly exposed the cap when the savage fired, and a ball struck the bear-skin in the centre, cutting a hole clear through it. With

a yell of triumph the Indian sprang from behind the tree, and rushed forward to secure the scalp of his supposed victim, but the next moment Wetzel fired in his turn, and sent the fellow to join his comrades in the happy hunting-grounds.

The hunter and his friends were now out of danger, but Wetzel had no idea of remaining where he was. It was not improbable that the Indians who were absent would return in the morning, and would pursue them, and it was necessary to get as far ahead of them as possible. Then he secured the ammunition of the savages, and examining their rifles and finding them of an excellent quality, he took two himself, and giving one to the woman he had rescued, after carefully loading them, he broke the fourth over a tree, having no means of carrying it away. Then, carefully covering up the glowing embers so that they would give the smallest possible amount of light, and thus give the other Indians, should they return during the darkness, some trouble in finding the place, he prepared to depart with his friends. They set off rapidly, for, though both were very much fatigued by their long

march of the previous day, the success of the attack upon the savages, and the necessity of reaching a place of safety as soon as possible, gave them fresh vigor. The three rifles which the hunter carried made his load heavy, but as the weapons were very valuable he determined not to abandon his prizes.

They travelled all that night and the next morning, and by noon, when thoroughly worn out, reached the Ohio River, a little above Wheeling. Here they were fortunate enough to find a man with a canoe, who was just returning to the settlement from a hunting expedition. He took them in his boat, and in a short while they were safe within the walls of Fort Henry.

Wetzel said, and said truly, that it was the best day's work he had ever done, and that he doubted if any man on the frontier could beat it. He was right; for, in all his campaigns, he never before nor after had the fortune to slay six Indians in one day.

The woman and the child he had rescued found friends in the garrison, and it was not long before the former became the wife of one of the settlers.